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An expositi-
on touching al the bokes of holie Scripture, and their excellencie.

THE wisedome of God crieth in the wilest of mortalle menne Solomō in the Prouerbes vnto al men of all degrees, and Ages, saiyng. *Geue eare, for I will speake of principall matiers, and the opening of my lippes shalbe to shewe out thinges that bee right. Depely dooe I muse vpon the trueth, and vngodlinesse to my lippes is moste abominable. In Righteousnesse are all the woordes of my mouthe: cursednesse, nor frowardnesse in theim is none. Readie, and easie thei are to them that list to lerne and to theim that will finde knowelege, right, and plaine. With me is counsaile, and preseruatione: With me is strength, and vnderstanding. Kinges through me dooe reigne, and Counsailours decree that is good, and iuste.* Prouer. viii.

1553.

p. 200.

When these thinges be so, I meruail what euil spirite driueth those menne, whiche disdeine the most sacred Bibles the onely fountaine, the most plentifull and richest treasurie of true wisedom & be madde vpon false, and countrefaict wisedome. For a man maie finde at this date, emong great studentes not a fewe, whiche wholie geuen (& al their whole life) to the colours, & deceiptes of Philosophie bothe dooe lothe the name of the Bibles, and when thei heare them spoken of, be readie to fal into an horrible quaking, and shiuering. Iwys (thei saie) there wanteth Learning, and eloquence in theim, and that thei hate the rude, and foule barbaritie.

The Bibles Eloquẽce

And yeat forsothe meruell it is, that thei shoulde sette vp Eloquence before theim, as a rule to liue by, and a marke whereunto thei woulde directe all their whole minde, and studie. In deede that wise menne oughte to loke for an other thing in this life, euen their verye owne Philosophiers themselues dooe testifie *Marcus Cicero* the prince of Eloquence, of a Philosopher doeth not require Elo-

quence

quence. For in his firſte booke, De finibus bonorum, & malorum, ſpeaking of Epicure: *The talke of this Philoſopher, ſaith he, diſpleaſeth me not, for he can vtter in woordes whatſoeuer he will, and ſpeaketh plainly to vnderſtande: And yeat a Philoſopher, if he bring Eloquence, I will not deſpiſe it: If he bring none, I will not greatly craue it.*

Why now be theſe mē more hard vnto vs, then Cicero? Doe thei not know that in our Bibles the heauenly philoſophy is taught euen after the capacitie of the common people? And Cicero proueth plainlie, that Eloquence without wiſedome is very hurtful. It behoueth then to couet wiſedome rather then Eloquēce, namely whē theſelfſame *Cicero* in a booke called Partitiones oratorię dooth define Eloquence to be nothing els thē wiſedō ſpeking plētifully wherfore whoſoeuer is deſtitute of wiſedom though he haue a faire, & a redie toūg to talke gaily, yeat ſhal he be called but a talker, & not eloquent. For as to ſpeake, and ſpeake wiſely is not all one, no more is all one, talking, and Eloquence Menne vnaduiſed and not wel in their wittes poure out many woordes many

times without reason nothing to the purpose, and cleane contrarie to al conuenience, and comelinesse. But a wise eloquēt man is no waster of wordes, but speaketh soche as doe profite, & serue to that ende whereunto thei be appointed, and he so speaketh theim as he ought to dooe, whether it be with many, or with fewe, with learned, or vnlearned, with his matche, with his worse, or with his better, the comelinesse of time, and place alwaies obserued. And within these limites haue the heathen masters of eloquēce thēselfes boūded in true eloquēce But sithens no writers haue been lesse wasters of woordes, then the holy auctheours, whiche minded onely thinges profitable, & to a certeine ende, that is, al to obteine blessednesse, to liue quietlie, iustlie, and honestlie, and haue also set foorth those thinges in a plaine, & clere fashion of speaking: I dare saie boldlie and trulie, that onely the writers of the Bibles haue vsed true eloquence, whiche thing, ỹ vaine louers of deceiptfull philosophy shal not be able to proue false, except thei cā before ouerthrowe the

True eloquēce

descriptiõ of eloquence, whiche we haue brought out euẽ of their owne auctours or els cã manifestly shew ẏ our writers be not soche, as we saie for, which as by good argumẽtes thei shal neuer proue, so assone as thei shalbe willing to dooe it, thei shal rũne in daungier of blasphemie, sacrilege, and high treason to God

S. Augustine also in his. iiii. booke, & vi. Cha. De doctrina Christiana: *I dare saie* (saieth he) *that al whiche well vnderstande what the holie writers theimselues doe speake, doe therewith vnderstande also, that thei ought not any otherwise to speake. For there is some Eloquence whiche better becommeth young menne, and some that better becommeth olde, and is not then woorthie to bee called Eloquence, if it agree not to the persõ that speaketh: So is there other that besemeth men of high aucthoritie, and that be in dede most diuine, and excellente.*

AND with this Eloquence spake thei which wrote the [illegible]ble, neither doeth any oth[illegible] Eloquen[illegible] become thẽ nor this any other, but it is mete euen for them alone: and the lower it semeth to some, somoche the higher it riseth, not in proude, and loftie wordes, but in

Hebruish phrases in the Bible.

soundnesse of graue & substãcial matter But the Hebruish maners of speaking greue the tender eares of these learned men, and seme vnto the latines, that is, to deintie, and delicate persones very harde, rude, and in no wise to bee abiden: yea I wis because a fine softe stile falling, and sounding swetely, in euery poinct, and delighting vs with pleasaũt Harmonie is that highest *good thing* whiche all menne oughte to desire, and especiallie regarde, without the whiche, yea the best thinges must be counted wooꝛst foꝛwoꝛne, and naught. Lo here our partialitie, and malice sheweth it self most of all. For not onely the Hebrue toung hath her facions of speaking, but the Grekes, and Latines haue theirs also. whiche hetherto no man hath discommended, noꝛ disbeautified.

Moreouer many haue written, and that largelie of the constructions, and proꝑeties of Speache vsed bothe in the Greke, and Latine toungue, many haue writtẽ of Schemes, and tropes. In thẽ to bee occupied, thẽ to lerne, and conne without booke, and with theim to enbroweder

browder our oration, is compted a very goodly thing. In these tongues no man cõplaineth of ỹ factions of speche ỹ thei be veri rare, & seldomely vsed. Only the lãguage of god for her owne maners of speaking, for her owne figures straunge to our hearing, semeth fowle, ougly, & lothesome: and wote you why? Merely euen for that vnto the olde Adam, al is counted vile, whatsoeuer is pure, & heauenlie, & what is ferrefet, vncleane, and filthie, that pleaseth right wel, & is wel allowed. Plato is trãslated into the latine toũg, Aristotle is translated, so is Lucian, Plutarche, Isocrates, and a great many of Greke Epigrammes. In thẽ, what was rugged is made smother, what was harde is made easie, what ioined not wel, is wel knit together, what was out of course, is set in good ordẽr, & brought to good Latine, that base was before. Now if the Hebruith maners of speaking, and endicting do so greatly displease you, why dee you not prepare for vs Latine Bibles? surely euen because the writinges of Paganes do please you better: What a thing is this? To encrease our Substaunce, wee sende our

childzen into Fraũce, into Italie, & into the farthest partes of Spaine to learne perfectlie the languages of those nacions that thei may the better, & the moze readilie traffique with the Frẽchemen, Italians, & Spaniardes. Here we spare foz no labour, we spare foz no cost, & all is counted sweete & profitable. Only to learne the holie tong, to accustome our selues to her maners of speaking, whiche bee somewhat straunge vnto vs, is thought painfull, & vnprofitable, and a thing in no wise mete foz gentle wittes Lo thus in dede doeth our malice shewe it self. Merely if to learne holie thinges we did bestowe yea but half the time, & diligence, whiche it greueth vs not to waste vpõ matiers nothing wozth, holie scripture shold of vs be lesse despised, & moze should be liked her faciõs of speaking, though seldome in vse, yeat very cunning, & clerkelie. Now touching the lerning in holi scripture, I se not what other thing true learning is, then very wisedome, neither what wisedome is other then very philosophie. For *Cicero* himself in his seconde boke *De off.* saieth.

Thei

Thei that desire wisedome are called Philosophers, neither is Philosophie anie thing els by interpretation, thē the loue of wisedome. And wisedome (as it is defined of the Philosophers) is a science of Gods matiers and of mens, and of the causes wherin those thinges be conteined.

After which fashion Plato also in the booke that he wrote De Philosophia, sheweth that the office of a Philosopher is to know heauenlie thinges, and to gouerne worldelie matiers, comprehending in that one, Philosophie contemplatiue, and in the other, Philosophie actiue. For the Platonistes deuide all Philosophie into Speculatiue, actiue, and Sermocinal. Vnto Speculatiue thei haue appointed Metaphysike, natural Philosophie, & the Mathematicalles: vnto actiue Ethical, Political, and Economical: vnto Sermocinal Grammar, Logique, and Rhetorique. And by Sermocinal, thei thought an entraunce to be made into Philosophie actiue and cōtemplatiue, in which stādeth the exercise, & strēgth of true wisedome. Of these thinges Cicero also maketh mēciō in his first boke De Academicis questionibus. Fur-

Diuision of Philosophie after the Platonistes.

ther if holie writte lacke learnyng, then lacketh it wisedome also, that is, science of godlie and worldlie matiers. Againe, if the holie bookes teache the knowlege of thinges perteinyng to god and man, then teache thei wisedome, & so consequently true Philosophie. But let vs se what thinges be entreated of, and taught in the Bibles, or this heauenlie Philosophie, that therwith also briefelie, and as it were by a shewe, it maie appere vnto ỹ reader what thing he should loke for by knowyng the Bibles, & how in thē the goodnesse of god hath set out to the worlde most aboundantlie ỹ great riches of his high knowlege & wisdome. Biblia in the plural nūbre onely, are called volumes or bokes. For in Greke Biblos, or Bibliō is a volume or boke. So this name is borowed of the Grecians, and geuen to the holie scripture, & is as moche to saie as holie bookes, or the booke of holie thinges. This selfe same holie booke is called a testamēt, and in dede a testamēt both olde, and newe. Sometime in holie writte, Testament is taken for the last wille, and ordinaunce of him that is dy-

Biblia.

Testament.

ying

yng. And after this speakyng, we saie, he made his testament, that is, he testified the meanyng of his minde, & shewed how he woulde haue all thinges disposed and ordered, and by a trope called Metalepsis Testament is taken for the thing it selfe that is bequethed, & so for geuenes of sinnes is in holie scripture called a testament. This woorde Testamēt is vsed also for a league, or couenāt For God hath bound him selfe vnto vs by a league, shewyng ẏ cōditions therof, bothe what we shoulde looke for of him, & also what we our selues ought to dooe. The cōdicions be, God wil be a true god, that is, a father in al sufficiencie, & plētifulnes to al men. And thei be bound to reuerēce and worship this God for their God in faith, innocencie, & charitie. And hitherto dooe belong al the promises: I am thy God, & the god of thy seede after the. The sede of the woman shal breake the head of the serpent. In thy sede all the tribes of the earth shal be blessed. Again hitherto pertein al the preceptes of liuyng, inespeciallie the .x. commaundemētes. Thou shalt haue no straūg god before my face Metalepsis

Bee

Be ye holie, for I also am holie. Loue thy neighboure as thy selfe. And this testament, and league, this ordinacion of God is vnchaungeable, is one, and euerlasting. For there was neuer at any time any moe then one onely churche, neuer but one onely true faieth and religion of saintes. How thē haue we the names of old & new testamēt? Merely of the maner of shewyng, teachyng, & deliuerying it vnto vs. As touching the very substaunce, it is but one onely. For whosoeuer wel considereth what thinges were taughte oure forefathers, he shal perceiue that thapostles of Christe haue taught vs none other. To them it was shewed that there was one God, that he onely was to be worshipped, & that in spirite, innocencie, and faieth. Also that there is one only iustice, and redēption of the world, onely one priest and true sacrifice, euen Jesus Christe the sonne of God, & man. Immortalitie also of soules, & risyng again of the bodies to be hoped for of God. And what other thinges haue the Apostles of the Lorde taught vs? So then touchyng the

Question.

Solution.

Intent of the Bible.

the substaũce of faieth, and of the Testament, al one, and the very selfe same thing is taught to vs bothe. Now for ỹ maner howe all one, and the selfe same thing was taught vnto vs, and them, Paule writeth and saieth. *Vnto our forefathers all thinges did chaunce in a figure, and to vs be those thinges come without a figure.*

For God hath geuen Christ vnto vs, whiche is the perfection of the lawe, that now we shoulde worship as present and past, that is, complete, and fulfilled, that whiche our forefathers had in a shadowe, as yet to be fulfilled, or rather to be loked for. And thus is sene the diuersitie in the fashiõ of teaching. Thei had figures, we haue the thing it self. Thei reioised in outward thinges and ceremoniales, we without figures enioie spiritual thinges that were signified. And hitherto perteineth ỹ priesthode of Aaron, and the diuers bloudie kindes of sacrifices, the figures of the priesthode and sacrifice of Christe. And by this diuersitie in teachyng, rise these wordes, olde, and newe testament. For that teachyng, wherby our religiõ was

taught

taught our forefathers in types and figures, is called the olde testament, but that which without figures describeth and sheweth vnto vs Christe the perfectiō of the lawe, is called the newe testament, not therfore newe, because the olde fathers knewe not Christe, but by conferryng & settyng it together with the olde, and because a new people, cuē the cōgregation of gentiles is receiued into this league through Christ, & preachyng of the gospel. And hereby now you maie the better perceiue howe the bible is called the olde & new testamēt. For the selfe written bookes of the bibles are no more the newe testament it selfe, then the tables & writinges testamentarie, or of leagues, are the testamēt or league it selfe: and yet of all men be thei called the testamēt & league. Thus of the thing that thei doo describe, thei take this name. Because then ỹ in the former bokes of the Bibles be declared preceptes, promises, factes, rites, traditions, and diuers waies, wherby God hath instructed & ledde mankinde in his testament, in his league, & true religiō, therfore, saie I, thei called it the old te-

Oldetestamēt

sta-

ſtament. And becauſe the latter bookes declare vnto vs how in Chriſt al thinges are fulfilled, made new, & in dede reſtored again, how alſo a newe people gathered together of the Iewes & gentils is ioigned into one bodie, & in faith & charitie worſhip God in Chriſt, therfore were theſe bookes called the newe teſtamēt. Touchyng the title & purpoſe of our heuēlie philoſophie, thus moche haue we ſpokē in general. After will we briefliē expoune what matier is cōteined in ech boke ſeuerallie. But firſt will I ſpeake ſomewhat of placyng ỹ bokes of the olde and newe teſtament, and how thei ſtande in ordre.

New teſtamēt

S. Hierome in the preface to the bokes of kinges, & Daniel, ſheweth ỹ the olde teſtamēt is diuided by the Hebrues into the lawe, the prophetes, & holie bookes writtē by holie men, called in greke *Hagiographa*. So he nūbreth of the lawe. v. bokes: *Geneſis, Exod. Leuiti. Numeri, Deutero.* & this he maketh the firſt ordre. In the ſeconde, whiche he calleth of prophetes, he putteth. viij. bookes. Joſue, Judges, wherunto he ioigneth the little boke of Ruth

The numbre and ordre of the bookes of the olde Teſtament.

The firſt ordre.

The ſeconde ordre.

Ruth, Samuel, Malachim, Elate, Jeremie with his lamẽtations, Ezechiel, and the.xii.prophetes. He also hath noted that these.xii. prophetes be not nũbred of the Hebrues, and the.lxx. interpretours in al one ordre, and the interpretours to reken thus: Oseas, Amos, Micheas, Joel, Abdias, Jonas, Mahũ, Abacuk, Sophonias, Haggeus, Zacharias, Malachias. The Hebrues to folow this ordre. Oseas, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Abacuk, Sophonias, Haggeus, Zacharias, Malachias. The bookes called Hagiographa he rehearseth. ix. Job, the Psalmes, whiche is comprehẽded in. v partitions, and one volume, the Parables of Solomon, his Ecclesiastes, the Canticles, the booke of Daniel, the Chronicles, Esdras, to whiche is ioigned Nehemias, and the boke of Ester. Al these put together, he thinketh of tholde law to be gathered xxii. bokes. He warneth vs yet that there be some, which count the booke of Ruth, and the Lamentations of Jeremie emong Hagiographa, and set theim in this ordre. First the

Hagiographa

booke

boke of *Paralipomenon* whiche with vs is diuided into two bokes, then the *Psalmes* the *Prouerbes of Solomon* nexte, after theim *Iob*. *Ruth* foloweth him, *Ecclesiastes* hath the sixte place, the *Lamẽtacions of Hieremie* the seuenth, the *Canticles* the eight, *Esther* the ninthe, *Daniel* the tenthe. *Esdras* and his cõpanio *Nehemias* the last. The holie writinges whiche be next in authority to the bokes of the first, & seconde order, those by likelihod thei called *Hagiographa* as first writtẽ, & made by holie men, the other ascribe thei to God himself, affirming him, and not man to be the maker of theim.

Bullingers minde touching these bookes.

To speake freely, as I thinke, I doe not see why by as good reason God maie not bee accoumpted to be the maker of these bookes, aswel as of thother and why thei of the firste, and seconde order maie not in likewise be called *Hagiographa*. Saincte Peter speaking of all the Prophetes, aswell of Dauid, Daniel, and Solomom, as of other: *No prophecie in the Scripture* (saieth he) *hath any priuate interpretacion. For the holie Scripture came neuer by the wil of man, but holie men of GOD*

S. Peter. 2

C.i. spake

ſpake as thei were moued by the holie Ghoſte.

Merely that theſe bee of equall auctoritie with the other, it is proued partly by many Argumentes, and eſpecially by this, that the LORDE Jeſus, and the Apoſtles in teaching, and confirming true, and ſounde Religione, vſed alwell the Teſtymonies of the Pſalmes, of Daniel, and other bookes emong thoſe called Hagiographa, As of Moſes, Eſaie, and other.

An other diuiſion.

There bee ſome, whiche of the matiers that the bookes treate of, diuide all the Olde Teſtamente into fower partes. Into the Lawe, Hiſtories, Preceptes of Wiſedome, and Prophetes. Of the Lawe, thei recken fiue Bookes, whiche bee well knowen to all menne. Thirtene of Hiſtories: *Ioſue, Iudicum, Ruth*: fower of the Kinges, two of *Paralipomenon*, *Eſdras*, *Nehemias*, *Heſther*, and *Iob*. Of wiſedome the count thoſe three moſte excellente of Solomon the wiſeſte of all mortall Menne: Into the Prophetes thei putte the Pſalmes

mes, the fower greate Prophetes, and the twelue lesser.

The iudgemente of Josephus touching these bookes.

I wil not kepe from you the Iudgemente of Josephus touching the bokes of the Olde Testamente, disputing against Appion.

There bee not with vs (saieth he) *innumerable volumes discording one with an other emong theimselues: But there be onely twoo and twentie bookes whiche conteine the iuste order of all times, whiche also are rightlie beleued to bee written throughe the inspiration of* GODDE. *Of them, fiue bee called the Bookes of* MOYSES, *conteinyng Lawes of liuyng, the firste Creacione of Manne, and his offspringe vntill the death of Moyses himselfe. And from that time vnto Artaxerxes, whiche emong the Persians reigned after Xerxes, the Prophetes, and soche as liued at those daies haue writte in thirtene bokes the actes that were dooen. The other fower teache Hymnes, & praises to godwardes, preceptes & rules of liuyng. From Artaxerxes vntill our time all thinges bee written, whiche yeat neither are woorthie so greate credite, nor so to bee esteemed as are the firste maiers: Euen for this verelie, that the Prophetes followed not still in one course one after other, nor*

throughly be knowen what thei were.

To these woordes streightwaies he addeth, whiche greately setteth foorth the authoritie of the Scriptures. *Hereby therefore it is plaine* (saieth he) *how reuerently we vse our scriptures. For in so many hundred yeres comming, and going, neuer durst any man put to, take awaie, nor chaunge any thing: but into all men of our nation is this faieth in maner graffed. To beleue all these to be the decrees of GOD, and for euer to abide in theim, and for theim, (if the matier so require) gladlie to leaue their liues*

Hitherto be the woordes of *Iosephus* And I moche allowe this Iudgemente of his touching the bookes of Diuinitie: whiche *Cipriamus*, or *Ruffinus*, (for so thinketh *Cassianus* in the Seuenthe booke of the onely begotten) welnighe folowing in therposition of the Crede, maketh soche an order of the holie bookes as hath semed alwaies vnto me best and plainest. He setteth together al the Historicall bookes, then the writinges of the prophetes, almoste in this wise.

The order of Cipriam, or Ruffinus

Firste he putteth the fiue bookes of Moses, next the Prophetes called of some the former Prophetes, that is,

the

the booke of Iosue, of Iudges, of Ruth twoo of Samuel, and two of Kinges. To these streightwaies he ioigneth the other bookes of Hystories, two of Paralipomenon, Hester, and twoo of Eldras. After these he setteth the Prophetes, whiche we call the greater. Esaie, Jeremie, Ezechiel, and Daniel. To thē he ioigneth the Bookes of the twelue lesser, whose names are rehearsed afore Last of al he setteth the other excellent Bookes replenished with all kinde of heauenlie doctrine. The booke of Job, the Psalmes, and thre bookes of Solomon, & within this nūbre both certein & plaine he includeth al the Canonicall Bookes of the olde Testament. Neither didde the Bishoppe of the moste auncient Churche of *Sardis*, nor that excellent learned man *Origenes* doctour of the Apostolicall Schole at *Alexandria*, reken vp any moe vnto *Melitus*. Of that one *Eusebius* maketh mencion in the fowerth booke, and fiue and twentie chapiter Ecclesiasticæ Historiæ, and of that other in the sixth boke, & eightenth Chapitre. Yet in placing them thei vse

not all one order, as after the diuersitie of examplers, and wil of the Scriueners you maie finde (I doubte not) these holy Bookes otherwise ordred also: one setting that before, whiche an other placeth behinde, moued not somoche by reason as by wil, and pleasure. But a wise reader will not passe greatly hereupon, knowing that wee ought principally to regarde not the order, but the matier. Neither woulde I my selfe haue stande so long herein, hadde I not wiste some menne so earnestly to require, and loke for soche an exacte, and curious handeling of this matier.

Numbre, and order of the bookes of the newe Testament

The newe Testamente is finished in seuen and twentie bookes. For the Euangelicalle Historie is sette foorth bothe in fower Bookes, and by fower Writers. The Actes of the Apostles are conteined in one Booke. The Epistles of Saincte Paule bee coumpted fowertene. To the Romaines one. To the Corinthians twoo. To the Galathianes, Ephesianes, Phillipianes, and Collossians one a piece. To the Thessaloniãs twoo: As many to Timothie,

one

one to Tite, one to Philemon, and one to the Hebrues. After these folowe seuen Epistles Canonicall. One of Iames, twoo of Peter, three of Jhon the Apostle, and one of Judas. Laste is the Apocalypps made, and published by Jhō the Apostle. By these bookes the Canon of the newe Testamente to bee fully perfeicte, all the auncient Writers, and the holiest Doctours with one consent dooe testifie, and agree. Saincte Hierome in those his prefaces. Augustine in his seconde Booke, and eighte Chapitre, De Doctrina christiana. Ciprian also in therposition of the Crede Origene varieth nothing from theim, saue that hee sheweth certeine Bookes to bee in this Canon, of whiche some menne haue somewhat doubted. As for the Epistle of Paule to the Hebrues. *I saie* (saieth he) *As it hath been taught mee of mine Elders, that it is Paules vndoubtedlie, and that all our forefathers haue so taken it.* Thus saieth Eusebius in the sirte boke the eighteenthe Chapitre *De Ecclesiastica Historia*: And he also folowing Origene writeth thus.

To assigne, and marke out all the Canon of the newe Testamente, first lette vs ioigne together the fowersquare heauenly Chariotte of all the Gospelles. Couple to theim the Actes of the Apostles, and after, the Epistles of Paule, whiche be plainly knowen to be fowertene had in auctoritie. Yet am I not ignoraunte the Latines to bee in doubte touchig the Epistle to the Hebrewes. Then set the first epistle of Iho̅, & the first of Peter also. Of these neuer was there any doubte at all. There hath been of the Apocalyps, of the Epistle of Iames, of Iude, of the seconde of Peter, of the seconde, and thirde of Ihon, whether thei were his that was the Euangeliste, or els some others of that name.

Eusebius touching the bookes of the new Testament

These be the woordes of *Eusebius* in his thirde booke, the thirde, and fiue, and twentie Chapiters. But I haue proued elswhere that the auctoritie of holie scripture is not appaired by the doubting of some, seing it is not confirmed, ratified, and established by Depositions, and opiniones of Menne, but approoued to bee infallible true by the moste sure Sentence, and approbation of almightie and euerlastyng GOD. In the librarie of the churche of Tigu-

rie

rie, there is in the vpper part of the colledge, a verie olde and true exampler of the Bible written by hande, which placeth firste the .vij. Epistles Canonical, euen in the same ordre that thei stande with vs. The epistle of Iames standeth firste, Peter next, Iohn after, the Jude, and the .xiiij. Epistles of Paule last, of whiche, that to the Hebrues standeth hindemoste. In that exampler the Euangelistes are set firste, the Actes folowe nexte, last after al the Epistles is sette the Apocalyps. And thus moche haue we spoken, touchyng the numbre, ordre, and distinction of the bokes of the moste sacred Bible. Now come we to the argumentes and breefe expositions of eche booke seuerallie of either Testament.

Moses.

Moses, as a golden cõduit, and firste father, by whom the heauenlie doctrine is translated from Godde to man, comprehending all vertue, and true wisedome in fiue bookes, hath taught the same, and whatsoeuer he hath described from the creacion of the worlde vntill his owne time, with soche diligence,

trueth, and vprightnesse, that he semeth none otherwise to haue set it out, then he had receiued from aboue, and by the secrete inspiration of the holie ghost. As for ꝑ lawe it selfe, as it was deliuered him from god, so did he publishe, & send it abroade. Wherunto he ioigned the actes of .xl. yeres, whiche space Israel wādred in desert, him selfe being a great part of those thinges, that there were doone, and seen. These bookes contein the historie of two thousande, fiue hundred, and seuentie yeares, wherof the *Genesis* hath. ij. M. iij. c. & .xc. For frō Adam to the flude are M. vi. c. lvi. yeres From the flude vnto Abrahams going out of Chaldee. ccc. lxiij. From thence vnto the death of Joseph. cc. xc. In *Exodus* be the rest of their afflictiōs, and the actes of their going out in the first yere The other. iij. bokes make vp the space of xl. yeres, in whiche thei wandred in desert, and al this put together maketh ij. M. v. c. lxx. yeres.

Genesis. The first booke declareth the beginnyng and causes of all thinges, specialle the creation of man, how it was frō

the

the beginnyng, how he fell and was restored again, how all men came of one, and being dispersed through the world, by enormeous faultes angred God, and caused the fludde to come vpon them. Againe, how thei that were saued in the same, gaue the beginnyng to all kingdomes: last, of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob holie Prophetes, whiche liued before the lawe written in tables, the liues, condicions, maners, religion, notable dedes and saiynges be discribed, and how thei descended out of the lande of Chanaan into Egipt, for these and other good men, this first boke of Moses was called of some, *The booke of iuste men*. Yet with vs and our elders hath their naming preuailed, whiche called it *Genesis*, doubtlesse of the generation and beginnyng of al thinges, at which Moses begynneth his booke.

The seconde boke declareth how the Israelites oppressed in Egipt by Pharao, & deliuered by their capitain Moses, were ledde into desert through the redde sea, how thei fought against the Amalechites, & were fedde with breade Exodus

that

that rained downe from heauen, how at the commaundemẽt of God thei did create a Magistrate, and at the last receiued lawes also, describyng, settyng out, and commaundyng true religion, holie maners, rites, ceremonies, and finallie al due and good ordre in the cõmune wealthe. Here also is touched a little their shamefull offence, that thei did in worshippyng the golden calfe. And of their commyng out of Ægipte, whereof it principallie treateth, this booke is called Exodus.

Leuiticus. Vnto this ioigneth Leuiticus, so called of the Leuitical ministeries, which it teacheth. It sheweth sundry kindes of sacrifices, vowes, pollutions, infections, general clẽsyng of sinnes. lawful & vnlawful mariages, & like other. It speaketh a little of ciuill Gouernaunce, but speciallie of holie rites, or customes, and, as we might saie, the bishoppes or canon lawes. Here maie we see how vertuous and learned priestes ought to be. All the misteries of the gospel, the priesthode & sacrifice of Christ, his vertue & power, yea, and our whole re-

redẽptiõ couertlie wrapped in figures, is here throughlie conteined.

¶ The fourth booke is called Numeri peraduẽture of this, that in it the people of Israel are nũbred. It declareth the actes from the second yere of their going out of Egipt, euẽ vnto the death of Moses. In it be many notable exãples of sondrie cõmocions, & rufflinges emõg rebellious people. There is shewed what euill ende seditious persones come vnto, & what maruellous chaunces happen to the rulers them selues. Numeri.

Moses of all menne moste constant and patient suffred vntollerable thinges dooen to him, bothe by his owne people, and other forein to, and yet he him selfe is not fautlesse neither. Many thinges are in this boke, which perteine to religion, and ciuil gouernãce, speciallie this: That bishoppes ought not to flie from intermedling wyth matiers of the cõmon weale, nor a ciuil officer to passe little vpon religion. Almost at the ende be described great battailes, and certaine lawes are declared at large in the great plaine of Moab.

The

Deuteronō. The fift and last booke is called *Deuteronomium*, or seconde lawe, and as you woulde saie, The lawe expouned now the second time. This is added of Moses vnto the other afore, as a briefe of all heauenlie Philosophie. In it is conteined all that euer serueth to liue wel and vertuouslie. The briefenesse thereof is moche commended and set by, and is a plaine commentarie of the ten commaundementes. This Booke the Lorde woulde haue still in the handes of his people, wherin he hath ordred all matiers, as to all degrees and ages thei maie be moste mete and conuenient.

Josue. The booke of Josue declareth principallie the trueth of Goddes promise: How after the death of Moses the people of Israel by the leadyng of Josue (of whom the booke hath his name, as of the chiefe persone) were brought into the lande of promise, the princes and people of the Cananites vainquished & destroied, in punishment for their great sinnes. It hath a goodlie descripti-

on of the holie Lande, and sheweth vnto vs an example of a verie good Prince, and obedient people. It conteineth ỹ historie of xxvi. yeres, or therabout.

Judges.

The Booke of Judges taketh his name of the Judges of Israel, whose actes and gouernaunce it declareth. And countyng Iosue him selfe, there were emong the people thirtene Judges, not as Kinges, and Monarches, but pastours, presidentes, and consuls of free people. Here is set out a free state with many chaunges, victories, slaughters, Oppressions, Deliueries, iudgementes, and commocions. Also the mutabilitie of the commons alwaies ready to the worst, diuerse heaute chañces, the fight betwixt religion, and superstition is here declared. It is a mirrour of that weale publique where is no head officer, but euerie man foloweth what liketh him best, & it sheweth what euil end that to moche libertie cometh vnto. Thẽ ensueth ciuill battail,

and

and destruction within theim selues. The historie is of. cccxxxvi. yeares, accountyng hereunto the time of Josue, and .xxiij. yeres out of the ministration of Helie.

Ruthe. The little booke of Ruth toke the name of the chiefe person. It treateth of no high matier, but sheweth how after harde happes, and greuous tẽptations cometh a merie ende: and that vertue is rewarded, if we cõtinue stil in goodnesse, and refuse not honest labour. It hath a rehearsall of Dauids, or rather of Messias kinred very profitable for that that followeth, and the vnderstandyng of the promise of God. This historie perteineth to the times of the Iudges.

Samuel and kinges. After this folowe. ij. bokes of Samuel, and .ii. bookes of kinges, a woorke of many and sondrie matiers, very profitable, and full of learnyng. By moste notable examples in them, be declared and confirmed the lawes, and promises of GOD. Out of theim also are made the Psalmes, and homelies of the Prophetes. To be shorte, emong the best

best, goodliest, cunningest, and moste ne-cessarie bookes of the Scripture these be not the laste. The booke of Iudges sheweth a state of gouernaunce, where the people, or rather the chiefe emong them dooe beare rule. The Historie of Samuel, & of the Kinges setteth out in his colours a Monarchie, or one highe gouernour, describing not onely what a King is, but the factions also of al his Courte, and Kingdome, bee it good, or euell. Here maie you finde how lawes be chaunged, religion kept, or neglected, notable examples also of Vertue, and vice, of trueth, falshod, prudence, iustice of princes, and priestes, bothe good, and badde. But who is hable in fewe woordes to comprehẽde the great varietie, & profite of matiers in these bokes? The first chieflie describeth the gouernaunce of Samuel, and Saul: The seconde of Dauid: the third painteth out the glorie of Solomõ, & how mightie kingdomes decaie except thei be mainteined by fer-uent loue of Godlinesse, religiõ, vertue, and concorde: So in the latter parte is shewed how the Kinges of the Isra-

elites, and Iewes, wounded, and killed eche other, how to their great coſt, and charge theie hiered the Egiptianes, and Aſſyrians to aide theim, and thereby gaue occaſione to inuade the Kingdome of Iſrael, as it is declared in the fowerth booke: Where alſo you maie ſee, a litle before their captiuitie, how greate miſerie thei were in vnder *Iecomias*, in the yere after the making of the worlde, three thouſande, fower hundred and thirtie. For the Hiſtorie of Samuel comprehendeth an hundred, euen the twentie latter yeres of *Heli*. Fowertie of *Samuel*, and *Saul*, as it is in the Actes: and fowertie of *Dauid*. The two bookes of the Kinges vnto the Captiuitie haue fower hundred twentie and fiue yeres, and fixe Monethes. To whiche, if you put the yeres of the Hiſtorie of *Moyſes*, and Iudges, you ſhall finde three thouſand fower hundred, and thirtie yeres. Adde hereunto the ſeuenty of the Captiuitie in Babilone, and you ſhall haue from the twentie of *HELI*, fower hundred ninetie, and three yeres, and fixe monethes. But into the num-

dre of seuentie yeres you muste put the litle booke of *Hester*.

It seemeth, those thinges written of Hester. her to haue been dooen vnder *Astiages*, vnto whome the myghtie Monarche *Euilmerodach*, sõne to the most victorious *Nabuchodonozer*, peraduẽter had geuẽ rule vpon those people, whom the first chap. of *Hester* speketh of. The same mã (as far as wee can gesse by the ninthe of *Daniel*) by likelihod was called *Assuerus*, a worde of Regall dignitie, his proper name being *Astiages*, euen the very same that by the mothers side was graundfather to *Darius*, not *Darius* the sonne of *Histaspis*, but of that auncient *Median* surnamed of *Zenophon Cyaparis*, which caried awaie *Daniel* w̃ him into *Medea*, eue thẽ also possessing .ii.c.xx. great Lordships. for. vii whiche his father *Assuerus*, (as it is said in the firste Chapiter of *Hester*) possessed were come vnto the *Persians*, vnto whom at the last ẏ remnaunt also, were subiect after the death of *Darius* the *Mede*, whose Daughter *Cyrus* hadde maried, beyng Victour, Lorde, and Kinge of Babilon, Mede, and *Persia*. But howsoeuer it

be, in this booke is described the courtlie life, foolishe, madde, and pernicious. There all thinges are gaie, and gallaunt, merue liue at pleasure, and by riotous excesse lose al thei haue. Many braue chaunces, great pensifenesse, perill, and heinous treason is there also. The proude, and rebellious quene *Vasthi*, is compared with the lowelie, and obedient *Hester*. *Aman* is a paterne of an ambicious, vniust, and cruell tiraunte, from base, & lowe degre enhaunsed into the toppe of highe dignitie, and foorthwith caste downe headlong, ending his life on the gallowes, an example to vs of vnstable fortune, and what thei shall come to, that geue cruell counsail. But *Mardocheus* representeth a vertuous lord standing on a sure ground, through his wisedome sauing himselfe, and his people, and by his prudente counsail doing moche good to other forreine Princes. As the litle Volume of Ruth, so this also taketh his name of the chiefe persone.

Now folowe the Bookes, whiche declare what happened to the people of

Esdras

God

GOD after their deliuerance. Esdras euen at the firste preacheth the trueth of Goddes promise. In captiuitie thei crie to the Lorde, and be heard. Seuentie yeres expired, by fauour of king Cyrus, thei retourne into Iewrie, with Golde, and riche giftes to be put in the Temple being made vp again. Thei set vp an altare, and hast them to building, but the worke was let two and fowertie yeres. At last vnder Darius the pōger the Temple was finished. Then came Esdras, renewed the Lawes, corrected the faultes of the people, and prelates.

After him came Nehemias, and walled the Citie, eased the people from hard Exactions, burdennes, and vsuries, by witte, and Wisedome holpe the Citizeines, and amended that was amisse. The Souldioures of Antichriste, and their Craftes, whereby the buildinge might not go forwardes, is here plainly set out, and how ware men should be to ouercome thenemies of the people of GOD. This Historie conteineth three score and tenne yeres. From the first Nehemias

of *Cyrus* vnto the twentie of *Darius* are coumpted eight and fiftie yeres. From thence vnto the two and thirtie are .xij in whiche the walles were made vp.

There remaineth the Chronicles, whiche the Grekes, and Latines diuide into two bookes called *Paralipomenon*. For some thinges passed ouer in the former Historie of the Kinges bee here rehearsed, and spoken of more largelie. Yet sure it is ỹ these be not the Chronicles of Juda, and Israel, whiche many times bee mencioned in the Bookes of Kinges. Doubtlesse those wer most copious commentaries of the actes of the kinges of Juda, and Israel, now being lost through wastful time. Some thinke these to be a briefe of this excellente historie, namely of the Kinges of Juda. They profite moste to the exposition of the Prophetes. Thus hitherto haue we rehearsed all the bokes of the diuine historie, whiche from the beginning of the worlde, vnto the building vp againe of the Citie of Jerusalē, that is to the two and thirtie yere of Darius, is thre. M. iiii. C. lxxviij. yeres, and vi. monethes.

Chronicles

So

So many shal he finde, whosoeuer will diligently reade ouer the holie Historie: for we made this accoumpte by the yeres of the Patriarches, Iudges, Dukes and Kinges. Neither maketh it any matier that Iosephus, Eusebius, and many other folowe an other accoumpt. We haue folowed the holy writers, yea and the trueth it self. Now to the other bokes of holie Scripture.

Job teacheth to beare pacientlye the crosse of aduersitie, and that not by trifling preceptes of Philosophie, but by wonderful consideration of Goddes prouidence. First of al is the historie it self: how there was a certeine good, and iust man broughte to greate aduersitie, and what shoulde bee the meruelous meaning of God in this cale. After the mater is discussed by a gret disputatiō: last of all foloweth the croune, & triumph of the victour. And in this boke is shewed more syncere philosophie, then in al the bokes ỹ euer al the philosophers wrote, of the which none hath tought any thig purely in this matier. *The Epicures* cal vs frō the crosse to delectacion, & pleasure. Job

The Peripatetiques counte sickenesse, pouertie, reproche, and dishonour among the greatest euilles that can be. Certeine Stoiques doe counsaile men that be in daũgier either to breake their owne neckes, either to hang, or kil themselues, or by some other violente death to shift frõ their peine. And other teache other thinges more foolishe.

Psalmes. The booke of Psalmes is an heauenly worke, treating diuers matiers, and is both profitable, and pleasaunte. It pleased God (whiche touched briefly al Sciences) to speake a litle of Musique also, and handle it purely, if perchaunce thereby men might be driuen from vncleane, and wanton songes. So whatsoeuer cunning, and holie sõges Dauid and of his nacion other wisemen, Poetes, & prestes haue writtẽ of diuerse matiers at diuerse times, all those would the most holie God shewe to the worlde at ones, in this boke. The psalmes conteine the praises of god, and godlinesse: many exaumples also of calling vpon him, of praying, complaining, thankes geuing, and earnestе repenting.

Other

Other bokes there be written of dedes and saiynges bothe good and badde, and of sondry duties that men should dooe. But in this you maie learne all factions of all kindes of life, and how the seruauntes of God ought to behaue themselues, whatsoeuer chaũceth vnto thẽ. This woord Psalme signifieth a song, and this title, *The booke of Psalmes*, is to saie, The bokes of songes.

Touchyng Solomon, thou readest in the thirde booke of kinges, & fourth chapter. *Solomon spake.iii.M. Prouerbes, and his songes were.M.v.* But all those we haue not. He hadde in his court to his familiars holie and learned menne, whiche through the prouidence of God gathered of al thinges the beste, and asmoche as was mete for vs, & haue written the same in.iij. bookes. Solomon.

The first is called Prouerbes, or sẽtences, short in dede, but wittie & swete, seruyng generallie to many thinges, and many men. In these he sheweth good and euil, trueth, & falshode. what is to be desired, and what to be eschued, addyng here and there diuerse godlie Prouerbes.

lie exhortatiõs. Some emong the Grecians haue defined a Prouerbe to be a briefe darke saiyng profitable to mans life: or worthie to be marked for some propre noueltie therin, as saieth Erasmus.

Ecclesiastes. The seconde boke is called *Ecclesiastes* Ecclesia is a Greke woorde, and signifieth people called out to heare matiers of the common wealth. *Ecclesiastes* is he that speaketh, or reasoneth openly before them. So in this booke is imagined a great multitude of people to stande together contendyng emong thẽ selues of the *Highest good thing*, and Solomon the preacher to come forthe, and condemne all their sentences, saiyng. *Vanitie of vanities, and all thinges vanitie.* For in the firste part of the Booke he entreateth that famous questiõ, *Vvhat is that highest good thing*, whiche in dede is, to be ioigned with God, and to haue the fruition of him for euer. Wherfore he replieth against them whiche saie, it is in knowledge of many thinges, in pleasure, in glorie, in excellencie, or richesse. Where also he sheweth how these thinges may

Summum bonum.

be

be well vsed. In the later chapiters he teacheth how we may iudge of good & euil, of thinges to be desired and eschued, & that by soche sentences, as he had before in the Prouerbes.

The thirde is the booke of Canticles, whiche is altogether allegorical. For in figuratiue speache it teacheth, what, & how good a thing it is to becoupled with God, the highest good thing. god is imagined to be the husband, and the faithfull soulle the spouse. Moche rehearsal is of loue, embracing, kissyng welfauorednesse, and beaultie. Wherby is drawen out the nature, pleasure, and strength of loue, and ioignyng together with God, For it pleased his goodnesse thus pretely to talke, and attemper him selfe to our affection, seing to man nothing is more swete, nor of greater strēgth then Loue. Let no man therfore conceiue with him selfe any foule, wanton, or filthie thing. All that is here, is holie, chaste, and honest. It is called *The song of songes.* and as you woulde saie, the moste excellente Songe, for that is the signification and strengthe of the Canticles.

the Hebrues doubling. So thei saie. The holie of Holiest, that is, the holiest of all.

Prophetes. Now folowe the bokes, oracions, sermons, Homelies, or declarations of the Prophetes. These were diuine Poets and oratours, holie preachers, priestes, chosen men, maisters of liuyng, and vertuous maners, cuē soche as in holinesse of life, in feruentnesse of spirite, in constaunce of minde, finally in most Godlie and effectuous eloquēce, were aboue all other moste excellent and marueilous. And in that time or middle age, many to haue florished, it is plaine, emong whom were Samuel, Helias, Nathan, Heliseus, Micheas the sonne of Iemla, whose sermons we haue not wholie, but so farre foorth as their saiynges and doinges are described in the holie historie: yet as moche as is necessarie, and enoughe for vs, we haue receiued, as it were by hande from one to another: that is. xvi. orations, of those that were moste excellent. All thei direct all their saiynges, and dooynges to the cōmon marke of the Bible. Partlie thei

thei write histories, partlie oratiõs. In histories thei shewe examples of liuing, faith, and vertue, of the might of God, his trueth and goodnesse. In their orations thei teache what is the nature, & disposition of God, what his will is, what thinges he is pleased with al, how we shoulde serue him in faieth, veritie, iustice, holinesse, and charitie. Thei exhort, dehorte, and coumfort. Thei greuously rebuke sinne, especiallie breaking of leagues, idolatrie, falshode, murther, periurie, guile, deceipt, viurie, oppression, iniurie, fornication, riot, adulterie, and soche other enormities. Thei call vs by all meanes to repentaunce. Thei set before vs the promises, and benefites of God, thei threaten his anger, & greuous punishmẽt: Again of Christ the sede of Abraham, verie God, and man, of his blessynges, redemptiõ, iustification, kingdome, and all the misterie therof, of the callyng also of the Gentiles, puttyng awaie of the Iewes, holinesse and glorie of the Churche, thei talke and commune so plainlie, that a man woulde thinke thei wrote an Euangelical

Entẽte of the Prophetes

uangelical historie of thinges that were past, and not of thinges to come. And this is the common entent of all these holie prophetes, of whose bookes seuerallie I will now speake a little.

Esaie. Esaie, one brought vp in the liberall sciences did prophecie at the least. lxx. yeres. For he florished vnder Osea, Iothan, Achas, Ezechia, and Manasses. Howbeit though we take nothyng of the kingdome of Osea, and Manasses, the Empire of the other kinges lasted lxi. yeres. In the. v. first chapters, he blameth the corrupt state of his time, calling them to repentaunce. Then telleth he a Vision that was shewed vnto him in the time of Iothã: After that he setteth the Orations, whiche he made in the time of Achas. He sheweth also to other forein nacions, what should happen to them. Moreouer he diligentlie describeth the notable battail of the Assyrians, a very great battail, & wonderfull in dede: and what sermons he made before the king, and the people, or euer this battaile beganne. And from the. xl. Chapter, he prophecieth deliue-

raunce

eaunce by king Cyrus, from the captiuitie of Babilon, comfortyng the people of God in their affliction, defending alwaies true religion, and improuyng false. At the last from the .xlix. chapter vnto the ende of the booke, he prophecieth of Christ and the church so plainelie, ỹ Hierome thought him rather to be called an Euangelist then a Prophet.

For (saieth he) so euidentlie dothe he set out all the misteries of Christe and the churche, that a mā woulde thinke him to prophecie not of thinges to come, but to write an historie of thinges paste. The same Hierome in ỹ preface of his first boke vpon the cōmentaries of Esai saith thus: *Let no mā thinke that I can briefely prehende the argument of this volume, touchyng all the holie misteries of the Lorde, as well howe Emanuel borne of a Virgine did noble woonkes and miracles, as that being dead and buried, he rose againe to saue all nacions of the worlde. What should I speake of his Logike, or of his Philosophie natural, and moral. What soeuer is of holie Scripture, what soeuer the tongue of man is hable to vtter, and witte to comprehende, in this booke it is included.* These be the wordes of .S. Hierome.

The

Jeremie.

The Prophete Jeremie in his wri-
tyng is not so faire and pleasaunt, as
Esaie, but more homelie, and nere the
capacitie of the common people, yet in
sentence as good. He was borne in a
little strete called Anathot. iii. miles frō
the Citie, him selfe a Priest, and of the
kinred of priestes, & sanctified in his mo-
thers wombe. He prophecieth being yet
a verie yong man, & as he saith him self,
he began in the. xiii. yere of Josias, and
ceassed not by the space of. xl. yeares,
after the citie was destroyed. Yea, for
his plaine preachyng, and free mouthe,
he was stoned to death, and so gaue vp
his spirite to the Lord. He rebuked the
sinnes vsed in his time, idolatrie, false-
hode, couetousnesse, fraude, crueltie, &
riote. He moued them to repentaunce,
and amendment. He taught diligentlie
faieth in God, and shewed theim how
to liue. He spake also of their captiuitie,
and comforted the sorie, shewyng afore-
hande the destruction that should come
to the nacions borderers. He wrote al-
so a lamentation, wherin he bewaileth
the ouerthrowe of that noble citie, and
royal

royall kingdome. Yeat in that kinde of writing appeare merueilous tokens of the iustice, and goodnesse of God. Ezechiel

Ezechiel, he also coming of Priestes was taken prisoner with Jeconias, and caried into Babilon: Where he taught thesame thinges that holie Jeremie did in Judea. Euery where, after the office of a prophete, he putteth in his writinges common places of Christe. He also prophecieth against Tire, and other nacions, threatning vnto theim the iudgement, & iust punishment of God. He stãdeth moche in declaring the building vp again of the tẽple, & newe citie: Doubtlesse propouning vnto vs the Misteries of ỹ churche wrapped vp in couerture.

Daniel being yeat but a very young man was led awaie into Babilon with Jeconias. This man described vnto vs very elegãtly certein profitable, & goodly historics of his time, the fight of true & false wisedome, of religion also, & superstitiõ. He liued vntil the time of *Cyrus* King of Persia, being then. lxx. yeres olde. He was a man of so great wisedome, that of him rose this Prouerbe, Daniel

wyser then Daniel. Whiche Ezechiel vsed in his .xxviij. Chapiter. Of al wisemen he was called *Polyhistor*, that is, one that knewe many thinges. For like as he rehearseth vp the fatall chaunces of all kingdomes, so in a briefe historie, or prophecie rather in fewe woordes he comprehendeth, and finisheth that, whiche the cõning, and curious writers of the Gentiles coulde not telle in many bookes how to beginne. Onely he openeth vnto vs truely the matiers of the Babylonians, Persians, Macedonians, and Romaines, and declareth of Christ the euerlasting kingdome. Now Antichriste also shall rise vp, what mischief he shall woorke before at last he be destroied. He sheweth the destruction both of the Citie, and of the whole worlde, the daie of iudgement, the rising againe of the bodies, and life euerlasting.

The lesser prophetes

After folow the .xij. prophetes, whom we cal the lesser, not for the smalnesse of the matier, woorke, or learning, but for their breuitie, and because in gretnesse, length, and copie thei bee vnlike to the other .iiij. whom thei call the greater.

Deas

Oleas standeth first, fine of wit, and vtterance, but somewhat brief, and therfore obscure. He prophecieth most against the tenne Tribes, or Kingdome of Israel. Sometime he toucheth a litle the Tribe of Juda. He rebuketh the faultes of the priestes, princes, and people sinne, and Idolatrie, vpholding religiō and goodnesse. He warneth them to repent, least thei all perishe, and sheweth that all nacions shalbe called. Oleas.

Joel seemeth to haue prophecied in the time of Ezechias, he, & Esaie together, after the destruction of the tenne tribes He moueth the kingdom of Juda to repentaunce. He setteth out the horrible daie of the Lorde, and their miserie to come, whiche yeat might be auoided by amending their liues. Yeat after he saieth it shalbe better with theim, and sheweth the signes of loue in ỹ churche, of whiche *Peter* is an interpreter in thactes Joel

Amos neither a Prophete, nor the sonne of a Prophete, not brought vp in any the liberall sciences, was but a rude homely vnlerned mā: yet in few, & sharp wordes, he preached to the tenne tribes Amos

still calling vpon repentaunce, as the other Prophetes did. And against the nacions that were borderers, he spake very grauely touching their sinnes, and the iust punishment of GOD. He was sore greued against the religious of the Jeroboams, and the wanton liuing of the priestes. He prophecied also of the calling of the Gentiles. He liued, and taughte, when the younger Jeroboam reigned in Israel, and King Osias in Juda, or Jerusalem.

Abdias. Abdias reasoneth against Idumea in the time of Achas King of Israel: and though he bee the shortest of all the prophetes, yeat dooeth he comprehende in a summe al the chief pointes of true religion: namely, that god is to be worshipped, and that in loue, and charitie, dooyng to our brother no wrong at all. For the lorde will reuenge it. He declareth saluation to be in Sion, euen in Christe and his faithful churche. He telleth the Idumeans aforehande that thei shoulde be destroied, with the causes why: and that nothing maie deliuer theim from the harmes hanging ouer their heddes.

Jonas

Jonas beareth the figure of Christ dy- Jonas
yng, and rising again. Wherof the lord himself maketh mencio in Math. He hath set out in a pure, and fine Historie the propretie, nature, and disposicion of god, how mightie, how good, & iust he is being god of the gentiles also, how vain the counsailes of men be, which are taken against the lord, what true repentaunce is, how weake man is, and that the proude flesshe, reasone, and deuise of man would kepe her estimation and be highly set by, yea, though it wer to the great hurt of other. He liued vnder Jeroboam king of Israel, being bothe a prophete, & an Apostle of the Gentiles. Yet prophecied he to his owne nacion also, as it is written in the fowerth boke of Kinges

Micheas semeth to haue been the fo- lower of Esaie: verely thei liued both at Micheas.
one time, and had bothe al one supporter euen *Ezechias* a right vertuous king He cried out principallie against the .ij. tribes, and then against the .x. He threteneth vnto theim vtter destruccio for their sinnes, and calleth them to repentãce. He inucieth against false prophetes. He pro-

phecieth of redemption by Christ, of his kingdome, and of the calling of the Gentiles. He teacheth euidently that Saluation cometh through Christ to them that beleue. and that the right worshipping of God is true vertue

Nahum

Nahum also flourished vnder Ezechias, and taught after Jonas. He preached againste the Kingdome of the Assirians, and against Niniue their chief Citie. He maketh as though letters of defiance had been written by God, & sent vnto the Assirians, wherein warre is proclaimed, & that it is shewed, who, & how mightie a God the enemy of the *Niniuites* is, & for what causes he purposed to destroie that great citie, & most auncient kingdom, & he setteth out the maner and facion how he would destroie it. By whiche thinges he sheweth a meruelious but a fearfull example, vnto al ancient, mightie, bloudie kingdomes, and again a great counfort vnto those whiche are oppressed by tyrannie.

Habacuk

It is likely that Abacuk was in the time of Manasses, after Niniue was taken, & about the beginning of the monar-

chie

chie of Babylon. But vnder this cruell and vngracious King all true religion was quite gone, mischief, and superstition bare the bragge. Many were slain: innocent bloud was shead, all goodnesse was banished. Some thoughte that god was faste in slepe, wherefore good men were not pleased, but spake somewhat sharply. The came foorth this prophete to comforte the sorie, discourage the tyraunt, and lift vp the weake: declaring that God would come shortly to reuēge good mennes quereles by power of the Chaldees, whiche waxing proude beyonde measure should be also destroied, and the Iewes sent home againe: And that then in deede should be performed whiche was spoken, touching the comming of Messias, vnder whom shoulde be the golden worlde.

Sophonias prophecied vnder Iosias, he, and Ieremie together. After the king by due reformation had set vp true relig iō againe, there were not a few emong the heddes, and the people which delited rather in superstition, loked and longed for a newe daie, and to se religion ouer- Sophonias

throwen, and cleane put awaie. Wherfore he blameth their wickednes, & moueth them to repentaunce, shewing aforehande that they should be punished by the Babilonians, and that yet he neither had so great cause to be proude, seing at length there shoulde come moche sorow, and mischief to him also. In the ende he saieth that Sion should be made vp againe, and prophecieth the comming of Christ.

Hagge

Haggeus vnder *Darius Histaspis*, blameth the vnthankefulnesse of the people sent home again, & their sluggishnes in building vp the temple. He biddeth thē haste forwardes the worke, & not to leaue of, for feare of any enemies. In thē he prophecieth plainly of *Christ*, and the *Churche*

Zacharie

Zacharie flourished with *Hagge*, & entreated of all one matter, exhorting the people, and specially the rulers to builde vp the temple. This man sawe the peculiar destenies of the people of Israel, and writeth many thinges, as Daniel dooeth. He biddeth them liue verteously, writing many plaine Prophecies of Christe, and his Churche, wherein he

is

is marueilous gospellike. He speaketh also of the times whiche folowed after Christes ascention.

Malachie last of all, whether he be the same Zacharias, or Esdras (as Hierome thinketh) or any other excellent writer, chideth the priestes bitterlie, rebukyng their vnsaciable couetousnesse, sloughfull lecherie, and filthinesse. He blameth also the people, and certaine light persõs, which murmured against God. Last of all, he speaketh somewhat of Christes time, and the daie of iudgement, in whiche euerie man shall be rewarded after his studies and woorkes. This Prophete also semeth to haue taught vnder Darius. Malachie.

Howbeit from the .xxxii. yere of Darius, whiche fil in the third yere of the lxxii. Olympiade, we haue nothing of auncient, and Canonicall Scripture, vntil Christes time: saue those thinges whiche the Prophete Daniel with Zacharie haue darkelie spoken of: how the Empire should be translated from the Persiãs vnto the Macedons: & againe from theim vnto that foule beast *Rome*, Rome. A supputatiõ of times vntil the comyng of Christe.

the

the destroier of many kingdomes, and to the Princes of thesame, vnder whō shoulde be borne the Lorde Christe, to make satisfaction for the sinnes of the worlde, to bring euerlastyng righteousnesse, and ioignyng the Gentiles vnto him, would forsake the Nacion of the Iewes, their temple and citie vtterlie destroied by the Romaines. And the Prophet makyng an accompt of these wonderfull thinges to come, saieth: Daniel.ix. *Numbre from after the buildyng vp again of the citie, or the.xxxii.yere of Darius.lxix.seuens, whiche make.cccc.lxxxiii.yeres. For.lxix.multiplied by the numbre of seuen, amounteth to so many, and thou shalt haue the time of Christes incarnacion.* With this accompt agree also the Olympiades of the Gentiles. One Olympias maketh. iiij. yeares. So the xxxij.yeare of Darius fell in the thirde yere of the. lxxij. Olympias. And the xlij. yeare of Octauius Augustus, in the whiche Christe was borne, was in the thirde yeare of the. cxciiij. Olympias. Now if ye take awaie from.cxciiij thother.lxxij.yeres, there shal remaine xxxij. Olympiades, whiche if you will multiplie by the nūbre of.iiij. you shall haue

haue. cccclxxxviij. yeres, which is ỹ time of. lxix. seuẽs, only. v. yeres ouer. For I saied. lxix. seuens did make. cccc. lxxxiij. yeres. But this little nũbre of. v. dooeth not darkẽ so great light. Thus we haue in our Bibles a sure & cõtinual history frõ the beginnyng of the worlde vnto Christ. And doubtlesse the wisedome of God would haue geuẽ vnto his church moe writers, had not these fewe notes of Daniel been thought sufficient. And what auayled to rehearse the Actes of those times, being in dede bothe troublous & nought. Those thinges whiche Iosephus in his bookes De Antiquitatibus, hath added to the Bible, doe profit the readers nothing at al. For ỹ most part be of ỹ deceites, lies, falshode, murthers, shamefull dedes & saiynges of the Iewyshe bishops, & of Herode which in al kinde of mischiefe bare the bel. Wherfore by the very prouisiõ of god, Actes of ỹ most corrupt & abominable time, seme not to haue ben throughly writtẽ, but onely touched briefely of Daniel, & Zacharie. For so was it necessarie & profitable tovs. Thus moch haue we spokẽ tou-

Note.

touchyng the Canonicall Bookes of the olde testament, peraduenture somewhat largelie, but not without profite. We will to these loigne the matiers of the bookes of the newe testament.

Euangel. Emong the writers therof, the Euangelistes be first: those be that write the historie of the Gospel. *Euangel* is a newe woorde of this signification geuē to a new thing. For the olde writers called *Euangelies* rewardes that were geuen to menne that brought good tidynges. Cicero writyng to his frende Atticus, saieth: *O swete letters, for the whiche I confesse my selfe bounde to geue an Euangel.* But we vse it not for the rewarde, but for the gladde tidynges it selfe: euen that from the father of heauen is geuē vnto vs a soonne, and with him all ioie and gladnesse. For the Aungell of the lord in Luke crieth out vnto the shepeherdes. *Feare not, for loe, I shewe vnto you great ioie, whiche shall come vnto all the people, because now is borne vnto you a Sauiour, whiche is Christe Iesus.* Thus the Euangel sheweth vnto vs ioie and quietnesse of mind, whiche cometh by this, that God hath sent

lent his Sonne a redemption of the worlde. Wherfore Paule defined the Gospel; *The power of God for saluation to all beleuers, through his sonne Iesus Christ our Lord.* Rom. i.

So they that set out this matier of iustification, that Christe hath taught faieth, repentaunce, and redemed the worlde from the deuil, and al iniquitie, be called Euangelistes, of whiche we haue but foure, yet the name it self may be extended to many. Euangelistes

Of them the two first, Mathew and John, be witnesses of that whiche they sawe and heard. For those thinges that they sawe, they shewe, and were a great part of the matier them selues, chosen of the Lorde Iesus into the college of the Apostles. Mathewe wrote first (as some thinke) in the ninth yere after the Lordes ascention. He sheweth in goodlie ordre the stocke and birthe of our sauiour Christe, and what was dooen before he shewed out him selfe, and toke vpon him his office of preaching openlie, and then what Disciples he chose, what kinde of teachyng he vsed, how great miracles he wrote, what bene- Mathew.

fites

fites he did to the people openly & priuatelie, howe he vsed his aduersaries how his frendes, how he handled the weake, and how the obstinate sinners. He sheweth his excellent vertues, his example of good liuyng, & high authoritie. Last of all, how by his disciple he was betraied to the Iewes, deliuered to the Gentiles, moste cruelie hādled, & at length also nayled vpon the crosse, was dead and buried, rose againe the thirde daie, shewed him selfe aliue to his frendes, & after ascended into heauen, sendyng his Apostles abroade into the whole worlde, to preache saluation throughthe death of Christe, to all that would beleue, and geue theim selues wholie to God.

Iohn. Iohn is thought late at the laste to haue written, and put foorth his historie of the woorde incarnate. Doubtlesse he hadde seen those thinges ỹ Mathew had written, wherfore he thought as it were to make vp the matter, specially in the doctine of Christe, for soche thinges as Mathew seined rither to haue passed ouer, or lightlie touched. Therefore these two historyes ioigned

together

together, we haue a very full & perfect declaration of all the dedes & saiynges of Christe.

Thei saie that Marke was the disciple of.s. Peter the Apostle. But whatsoeuer he was, in dede he shewed him self verie wel learned, trustie, & diligēt. For he knitteth the gospel together very briefelie, and clarkelie, shewyng vnto vs, as it were an abridgemēt, of the Euangelical historie. Some saie he wrote the gospel, as he had receiued it of Peter. But it is vncertaine what time he put it foorth abroade. Marke.

Luke was not an Apostle, but a disciple of ye Apostles, & one alwaies in their cōpanie, speciallie in Paules. This mā wrote.ij.bokes of the euangelical historie. In the first he cōprehendeth the saiynges and dooynges of Christe, as did also Mathew and Marke. Luke.

In the latter he sheweth how and in what place Christ wēt out of the world and in what wise the holie spirite promised did come frō heauē: howye church first began encreased, and grewe to the best: what was ye doctrine of thapostles rites, or holie customes, religiō & faith: Actes of the Apostles

who

who were false Prophetes, who true, what were the natures, deuises, and condicions of them bothe: What was the studie of the worlde, and mindes of persecutours, what c auses did folow theim, and how the Gospel was receiued. Many thinges be written of the Sermons and dedes of Peter, and other Apostles, of the preachyng of Paule also, and his iournetes. Therefore this Booke is called the Actes of the Apostles. And all this Historie of them and the Gospel conteineth about lx. yeres. For Christe semed to be about xxxiij. yere olde, when *Tiberius* had reigned. xviij. yere. Paule in the. ij. yere of Nero came to Rome bounde, and was two yere prisoner at large. Untill this time did *Lucas* write his historie, & liuyng lxxxiij yeres, died in the peace of God buried at Bithynia.

A supputatiō of the times of the newe Testament

Now where some haue made mēcion of the Gospel of *Nicodemus*, *Thomas*, *Bartolomew*, and certaine others, I wot not who, surelie it nothing pertaineth to the perfection of the Canonical bokes. For Iohn him selfe testifieth: *These thinges*

The historie of the Gospels, and Apostles per fect.

whiche

whiche he hath written to ſuffice for the faith that may ſaue vs. **Wherof ſpeaketh alſo the holy father Ciril.** *Not al thinges (ſaith he) be written that the Lorde hath doen: but that whiche the writers thought to be ſufficiēt, aſwel for opinions, as for maner of liuing, that we ſhinyng in true faith, woorkes, and vertue, maie come to the Kingdome of heauen, through our Lorde Ieſus Chriſte.*

So when it was perceiued that al was writē whiche perteined to godlineſſe, it was thought neither neceſſary, nor worthie the labor, either to put to any more, or to make any thing of newe. And if thei had, thei coulde not haue doen any other thē was ſet out alredie. This is euident in this that we haue. How litle differēce (I prai you) is in the thre firſt: perchaunce the olde Fathers willed of one matier fower writers to remaine. ij. apoſtles, and. ij. their diſciples, that when al was dooen, it might be ſeen any larger inſtruction herein, or contrarie to this, nothing to auaile, no not if there ſhould riſe vp an hundred Writers, ſens theſe that we haue agree, al in one, and thoſe that ſhoulde folowe coulde write but theſame. And to what purpoſe were it,

in infinite volumes to entreate all one thing declared by fower witnesses sufficient before? For the same entente also it semeth that Luke wrote not al the Actes of al the apostles, sins the rest followed none other waies, neither in doctrine, nor in liuing: And that by thactes of one, or twoo, the residue maie bee iudged. Bee it therfore ascribed to prudence, and not counted lacke, or imperfectnesse, that the Historie of the Gospell, and Apostles goeth hetherto, and no farther.

Thentent of the Epistles

Now folowe the Epistles written vnto diuerse Congregations touching faith in Christe, true repentaunce, and innocencie of life, whiche in deede is the commune marke, and entent of theim all. The occasions of theim be diuerse, and so is the Argument, or matier. The firste in order, and moste excellent of all, is the Epistle written to the Romaines, in whiche he so describeth, and setteth out the Gospelle, as he preached it to the Jewes, and Gentiles. He disputeth of Sinne, and proueth al menne to be sinners. After he reasoneth of Justice

To the Romaines.

Sinne.

or goodnesse, & sheweth that onely thorow the grace of Christe by faith, & not by any workes, or merites, the beleuers to be iustified. Then he declareth the effects of Grace, and faithe, teaching the iustified to leade a penitente life, to kepe themselues from sinne, to liue holilie, and sobrelie. He disputeth of the lawe, and strength therof, of the nature, and sight of man newe borne againe, of the calling of the Gentiles, the refusing, and restoring the Iewes, at laste he enfourmeth, and facioneth our maners with many good, and wholesome preceptes.

Iustice, or goodnesse.

Grace, and faithe.

Good liuing.

Lawe, and strength therof.

In the firste to the Corinthians he entreateth of diuers matiers principally correcting the faultes of that Congregation. He reasoneth against secular Philosophie, for the simplicitie of the Gospelle. He disputeth of the ministerie of the woorde, and of the fruicte, and glorie therof, whiche ought to bee referred to God alone. He rebuketh the shameful riotte, and lecherie of the Corinthianes, speaketh also of Mariage, Bigamie, and virginitie, willing them

The firste to the Corinthians

to auoide their straunge facions in holy rites, and seruice of God, the true christian vse therof to be kepte, and restored againe, he speaketh of diuers giftes of grace in the churche, of concorde, charitie, toungues, vse of prophecie, resurrection of the deadde, and many other profitable thinges.

The seconde to the Corinthians

The seconde Epistle is in maner of a defence, or answere to certein rebukes. In this he laieth the law, & the Gospel together. He sheweth with what pureues, & great peril he preached the Gospell, and how wel thinges came to passe He speaketh also of the almose to the poore. Laste, he laieth many matiers of his owne, to defende his authoritie against false Prophetes.

To the Galathians

The Epistle to the Galathians, is in maner a Breuiarie of that to the Romaines. He disputeth of Justificatione by faithe in Christe, against the Justification by the lawe, and workes. He facioneth also the life of theim that be iustified by faith. In the beginning he speketh moche of his vocation, and authoritie of his apostleship, whiche the enemies

mies of grace would haue had vtterlie to be disanulled.

The epistle to the Ephesians is a brief but a notable exampler, how he preached the Gospel to the Gentiles. He teacheth the beleuers to be iustified by grace onely through faith, al ful perfectnesse to bee in Christe, and through him the gentiles also to be brought into the fauour of God. After be diuers exhortacions to good liuing. To the Ephesians

He warneth the Philippianes by a shorte Epistle sent from the citie, not to be offended with his imprisonment, but to go forwardes in the trueth, that thei had receiued. He desireth thē to be al of one minde, and to beware of false Apostles: chopping merites, and the law together with the Gospelle. In the ende he geueth Lessons of vertue, an he dooeth many times before. To the Philippians

The Epistle to the Collossians is a breuiate of that to the Ephesians. It treateth of all one matier more briefly In this he rebuketh sharpely the false Apostles mingling Jewishnesse with the Gospel. To the Collossians

The first to the Thessalonians

In the firste to the Thessalonianes he praiseth their faith and constance, encouraging thē to continue in the same, to liue a pure, and a Christian life, and not bewaile the deadde with soche out cries, and howling, as the Gentiles doe where also he reasoneth of the Resurrectione, and daie of Judgemente, of watching, and holines of the christians.

The second to the Thessalonians.

In the latter he paincteth out Antichriste, and his Kingdome, and willeth that the dranes those idle beastes shold eate no honie.

The first to Timothie

In the first Epistle to Timothie, he setteth before vs a very perfeicte exampler of an Euangelical Bishop. He disputeth of true, and false Doctrine: of the liuing, maners, and housholde of a Bishop, of his studie, and care for Ecclesiasticall matiers, of auoiding vnprofitable questions, of wrangling, and intricate bondes of couetousnesse.

The seconde to Timothie

In the seconde he committeth to his charge the defence of founde Doctrine, he remembreth him of his dutie, and not to be discouraged for any aduersitie: he prophecieth of the departing awaie frō the

the saieth in the latter daies.

In the Epistle to Tite he repeateth in maner the selfe same thinges more briefly. He sheweth what men shoulde be made bishoppes, teaching bothe yoūg and old their duties. He speaketh much of the misterie of Justificacion by faith and commaundeth to flie Sophisticalle questions, and incurable Heretiques. To Tite.

In a briefe Epistle, but very plaine, cunning, and full of Christian charitie, he desireth Philemon to bee good to his Seruaunte Onesimus, whiche had runne from him: And this he wrote at Rome being in prisone. To Philemon

The Epistle vnto the Hebrues is a goodly, and cunning example, in what wise he preached Christ vnto the Justhe nacion. Straite in the beginning he proueth by plaine testimonies of scripture that Jesus Christe is very god, & man, and therefore that his doctrine shoulde not be set light by. Also that he is the onely and true Priest, and euerlasting sacrifice, so that to pourge, & put awaie sinnes, ther needeth neither any of Aarōs priestes, nor oblations. For he hath per- To the Hebrues.

feict iuſtification, that poſſeſſeth Chriſte by faithe. He ſheweth that by faith all the ſainctes of the olde Teſtament pleaſed God, and ſerued him in Pacience, charitie, & innocencie of life, vnto whiche vertues, he exhorteth theim. In the ende he putteth certein rules of good liuing. And lo, this is the abridgement, and ſume of that excellent Philoſophie whiche the Apoſtle Paule learned in the thirde Heauen, and left vnto vs in fowertene Epiſtles.

The Philoſophie that paul learned in the third heauen.

Seuē Epiſtles Canonical

The other. vij. bothe holie, and briefe, be called of our eldres Canonicall, and Catholike. Canonical, becauſe thei pertein to ỹ Canō of the ſcripture. Catholique, for that thei wer writtē not vnto certeine churches, but vniuerſally to al

The firſt of Peter.

Peter the Apoſtle wrote. ij. In the firſt he exhorteth to pacience, and ſtedfaſtnes in faithe. He teacheth maried folkes, maſters, ſeruauntes, prieſtes, and ſoche as be in aduerſitie to leade an holie life.

The ſeconde of Peter:

In the latter he prophecieth of theſe laſte vnhappie times of Antichriſte, warning vs to embrace the pure Euangelicall Doctrine, and to keepe it faſte.

Of like argument or matter is the epistle of Jude. Jude.

James rebuketh the faultes of his time, teachyng true religion not to be in vaine bablyng, and boasting of faith, but in Godlinesse that bringeth foorth good woorkes plentifullie. He geueth also many holesome, and necessarie preceptes of liuyng. James.

John Euangeliste the welbeloued disciple of the Lord wrote iij. Epistles. In the first he speaketh moche of charitie, and pureneſſe of liuyng, the fruites of true faieth. In the seconde and the thirde he setteth out the same charitie, and trueth, biddyng vs to beware of Heretiques. The Epistles of John

The laste booke written of the same Apostle hath a Greke name. It is called Apocalyps, or Reuelation. In this boke he prophecieth and setteth out, as the Lorde had opened vnto him, what thinges shoulde happen to the churche of GOD, euen to the worldes ende. Thou shalt find in it many thinges borowed of Ezechiel, Daniel, zacharie, and other prophetes. And thus it hath Apocalyps

pleased

pleased the goodnesse of God to warne his people in good season of the mischiefes that were to come, ℔ thei maie the more wiselie prouide for thē selues, and praie to God the more hartelie.

Canonical bookes.

Moe bookes are not in the Canon of the new testamēt. Neither is it greatlie to be cared for, that some haue doubted of the Epistle to the Hebrues, of the former Epistle of Peter, Iude, Iames, and the Apocalyps. For what is it to vs, that a fewe corrupted with their owne affections haue doubted of thinges certaine. It is to be beleued, these bookes of bothe the Testamentes, whiche we haue reconed vp, to come of the spirite of God, to be written & left to the churche by the prophetes and Apostles of the Lord: in them to be taught all trueth, with thē to be mingled none errour nor lie. Of the olde fathers this was called Canonical Scripture, because it was geuen to vs of God for a rule of liuyng, and a trueth, by whiche we ought to trie all thinges, and thereafter to liue. The Hebrues cal their lawe, *Thora*, whiche name thei geue

Nota.

gene-

generallie to the woorde of God, and in dede to all the whole Scripture. *Thora*, signifieth a directorie to lead vs foorthe, of the whiche the Grecians also dooe seme to haue borowed that woorde of theirs, Canon, whiche you maie call, a lawe, or rule.

There remaineth to speake somewhat of the Ecclesiasticall Bookes, of some called *Apocrypha*, the woorde peraduenture not al agreyng to the thing. Sainct Hierome in Prologo Galeato after he hadde reconed vp. xxij. Canonicall bookes, saieth thus: Ecclesiastic call bookes

Whatsoeuer is besides these, must be put emong Apocrypha. Therefore the boke of wisedome, whiche commonlie is intituled to Solomon, the booke of Iesu the Soonne of Sirach, Iudith, and Tobie, are not in the Canon. I haue founde the firste of the Machabees in Hebrue, The second is in Greke, and that maie be proued euen by the very phrase. &c. Furthermore Saincte Augustine in the. xviij. booke, De ciuitate dei, the. xxxvj. chapter, saieth: that the bookes of the Machabees, be taken of the churche for Canonical. And yet he him self esteemeth thē not so much, as he doeth thē, whych doubtles be canonical

As

As you maie see in the seconde Booke xxxij. Chapter Contra Epistolas Gaudentii, and againe in his seconde booke xviij. Chapter, De doctrina christiana Howbeit sainct Hierome in the Prologue, Super Prouerbia Solomonis. *The churche in dede, saieth he, readeth the bookes of the Machabees, but yet dooeth not receiue them emong the canonical Scriptures.* And speakyng of Baruch the Prophete, and the Epistle of Hieremie that is ioigned vnto it, he sheweth that thei are not conteined in the Hebrue Canon, but onely in the common edition, and in the Prologue that is before Daniel, he saieth: ye neither the historie of Susāna, ye himne of the .iij. children, nor the tales of Bel, and the Dragon, be founde emong the Hebrues. But of the historie of Susanna Origene demed farre otherwise, & gaue great credite vnto it, albeit he denieth not, that in the Hebrue it is not founde. Hitherto haue I rehearsed what other menne haue thought of the Ecclesiastical bokes. Verely I suppose (sauyng yet all other mennes iudgementes) ye thei may right wel be called

Hagi

Hagiographa, & that yet thei ought not to be takē as good as the canonical bokes, nor to be of equal authoritie. And I thinke plainelie that there ought a diuersitie to be made betwixt the bookes Apocryphal, and Ecclesiastical. This Greke woorde *Apocrypto* signifieth to hide. So then Apocryphal, be hidden or priuie bookes, whiche at home in dede or priuatelie to reade, it maie be lawful for euery man at his pleasure, but in cōmon assembles, and spectallie in the holie temples, thei ought not to be read openlie, nor anie man to be charged by authoritie of them. Of this sort is the Gospel of *Nichodemus*, *Thomas*, and *Bartholomew*, and manie other moe of this marke: and of them is made rehearsal in the Canonicall decrees, the fiftenth distinction. Ecclesiastical bookes seme to be called those, which although thei be not in the Hebrue Canon, yet because thei teache good thinges, and are not contrarie to the bookes Canonical, the churche dooeth receiue, & reade in the cōgregatiō of saintes. And I am not the first that so thinketh. Thesame

Difference betwixt Apocrypha, and Ecclesiasticall bookes

Apocrypto. Bookes Apocrypha.

Bookes Ecclesiastical.

before

before me taught Ciprian or Rufine in the Exposition of the Crede, whose woordes if any man will haue, be these:

We muste knowe that there be other bookes after the Canonicall, whiche be called of our elders not Canonical, but Ecclesiastical, as is Sapientia Solomonis, *and an other Sapientia whiche is counted to be of Iesu the soonne of Sirach, and is called emong the Latines by this generall name, Ecclesiasticus, wherby not the aucthoure of the boke is signified, but the qualitie of the writyng. Of the same sute is the booke of Tobie, and Iudith, and the bookes of the Machabees, al whiche thei woulde in dede haue to be readde in the churches, but the aucthoritie of our faieth not by them to be confirmed. Other Scriptures thei called Apocrypha, and woulde not haue them redde in the churches. Thus moche saieth Ciprian.*

Furthermore of the Ecclesiastical bookes, some teache histories, and some prophecies, we will nowe as we goe, touche briefelie the matiers that thei treate of.

Tobie.

Emong the histories in a great sorte of exāpters, the boke of Tobie stādeth first, whiche in my minde teacheth to ordre an housholde moche better then Xenophon

nophō, and Aristotle to. For he sheweth all thinges, bothe by good preceptes, & liuelie examples. The elder Tobie master of the housholde hath experience bothe of good fortune and badde, as wel in his bodie, as in his goodes, and yet in that chaunge of the worlde dooeth nothing vnmete for a good housekeper to dooe. In his greatest pouertie & trouble he kepeth still the true worshippyng of God, his innocent life and goodnesse he chaūgeth not, in no pointe sekyng helpe by fraude and crafte to relcue his pouertie, yea him selfe being in very great nede yet doeth good to other, doing his dutie al that he can, & helpyng to burie the deade, & by moste holie crample occupieth him selfe in his house, rulyng equallie his wife, his sonne, and his familie. Besides this he maketh his testament, he instructeth his soonne moste perfectlie, he prouideth for his posteritie, he sheweth him selfe thāketful bothe to God and manne, and in euerie point dooeth the office of a good housholder.

But TOBIE the younger his Soonne, shewyng how children

should

shoulde loue their parentes, first loueth and feareth God, obeieth reuerentlie his fathers commaundementes, being paineful, diligēt, curteous, sobre, chaste, and fearyng God in all thinges. In this boke is the honestie of mariage solemnelie sette out, how vertuouslie it shoulde be made and kept, how euil it frameth, if we come not to it with the feare of God. It sheweth that the readiest waie to put all euil out of an housholde, is to studie to be vertuous, and that the troubles of good mē shal haue a good ende, the wicked to perishe for euer, with many other good thinges like to these.

Judith. The historie of Judith, as of Tobie, hauyng the name of the chiefe person, setteth out the cruel tyrānie of the wicked, their pride, disdeigne, and most vnthriftie ryot, presumyng yet neuertheless verie great thinges of their owne strength. So the maiestie, the power, the valeantnesse, the gorgeous pompe passyng the pride of the Persians, whiche was in Holofernes lieutenant of the kinges armie, is here liuely painted

Con-

Contrarie to him is sette a lowlie Widowe, weake, and fraile, but vertcous, and chaste, fighting against that his inuincible power with Faieth, Praier, lowelinesse, and Wisedome. And being armed with these, warely taking vauntage of the Capiteines surfite, lust, and pride, she taketh this wicked man in his owne snare, and killeth him with his owne swearde. By this appeareth the merueilous will of God, exercising his seruauntes with the Crosse, and not deliuering theim by and by, but at last easelie destroiyng all the strength of the wicked, and laughing theim to scorne. Thus he alwaies sheweth his mighte, deliuering all theim that trust in him. Judith praising the benefite of God techeth vs to be thankeful, and that God onely is to be called vpon, and worshipped, whiche in battaile geueth victorie, in peace ioie and felicitie.

Susanna is a very good exemplar of trust, and vertue in maried women: the same teacheth that GOD kepeth the iust, and defendeth their innocencie, punisheth, and shameth the wicked fornicatours Susanna.

catours, and adulterers, specially naughtie iudges.

Bel, and the Dragon.

The contention betwene Daniel, and the priestes of Bel, for thoutward worshipp̄g of gods, & idols, setteth out the nature of true, and false religiō: of that one, the shameful craft and confusiō, of that other the good simplicitie, & victorie. But such as take this for a fable, let them beware wherupon thei take their grounde. The historie is ful of learning and profite. Thei also whiche sate, that the childzen in the fornace had scant so moche leasure as to plaie, & make verses, seme craftily to condēne the matier By a like reason many thinges maie be set light by in the canonicall bokes. *We reade that Ionas praied vnto the Lorde out of the bowelles of the fysshe.* This semeth not incredible, the lorde being his comfort. Yet idle felowes will dispute what leasure the childzē had in ȳ fornace. The himne it self is a goodly praise of God, and his workes, and a mouing therunto.

The song of three childzen.

The thirde of Esra. reherseth certein thinges out of the. iiii. boke of kinges, and many matiers whiche are declared

the thirde of Esdras.

in Esdras, and Nehemias, but more at large, with many goodly examples of vertue.

The fowerth of Esra. telleth visions or reuelatiõs cõteining diuers chaũces of the people of god. And although our forfathers haue set lest by this boke, yet haue thei not vtterly cõdemned it, for it serueth to a purpose & is also profitable Fowerth of Esdras

The fragmentes, and residue of Nether geueth many proper examples of praier, and certeine other profitable thinges. Fragmentes of Nether

The firste booke of the Machabees for the fineneſſe of stile, sauoureth somwhat of the olde Phrase, that is of the Canonical scripture, and sheweth vnto vs goodly exãples of faith. For of faith manlineſſe, noble courage, temperance, cõstaunce, loue to god, & their countrie the noble childrẽ, w̃ that right excellẽt lord *Mattathias* their father, are most liuely presidentes. Thei fight for their coũtreie, & holie lawes against the vngodlie, with great succeſſe: Yeat abuse thei not their victory. First thei set vp again the right woorshipping of God, and re- First of Machabees

dresse the common wealth whiche was far out of order. Hereby we maie lerne to feare God, and fight against infidels, all soche as by lawefull vocatione haue that Office committed vnto theim. Diuerse, and meruelous chaunces bee in this booke, wherin euidentlie appereth the goodnesse of God, his trueth, Iustice, equitie, Mercie, and many other thinges that the Scripture speaketh of in him, how he defendeth his seruantes and punisheth his enemies. This boke is of soche price, that great losse it wer for good men to lacke it.

The seconde of Machabees

The seconde booke in stile is vnlike the other. It is full of Grekishe Eloquence: neither haue the olde fathers so greatlie esteemed it as the first. It repeateth many thinges declared in the first, but more plainly. It conteineth the famouse Martyrdome of the seuen brethren, and the stedfast belief of the olde father Eleazer, mete to bee folowed of all good men, whiche thinges Cecilius Cipriānus in the exhortacione to martyrdome speaketh of largelie.

The confessiō of Manasses

The confession of Manasses sheweth vnto

vnto vs the maner of true repentance, and iust confessione of our sinnes to bee made before God.

Among other bokes whiche contein precepte of liuing, Sapiētia is set first being in dede, as it is called, the wisedom of Solomon, not that he was the maker thereof, but the wisedome soche, as might beseme Solomon. The Stile is pure, and fine: It teacheth, and praiseth wisedom, and telleth of what effect and strength it is, and how moche to bee laboured for. Herein he laudeth Godde highlie, whom to knowe is very wisedome. It rebuketh falle wisedome, and that deadlie poisone Idolatrie, of whiche Lactantius speaketh and saieth. *There can be no woorshipping of God where Idolatrie is.* It sheweth many thinges that belong to true wisedome, which here thei maie see that list to learne. Sapientia.

Ecclesiasticus of Jesu the sonne of Sirach, hathe moche that is before in the prouerbes. He writeth more largelie, & is not so hard. Here maie be lerned moral philosophie moche better, & with lesse leopardie then out of any Plato, or Ecclesiasticus.

Aristotle. Almost at the ende is a goodlie praise of holie fathers, and their faith, wherunto peraduẽture thapostle Paul had an yie, whẽ he wrote theleuenth chapiter of thepistle to the hebrues, in whiche also he cõmendeth the faieth of our elders, not somoche ꝑ we shoulde know it, as endeuour to folowe it. He cõcludeth his worke with praiers to God.

Baruch. The prophet *Baruch* is moche alleged of the doctoures. He wrote a litle boke being in captiuitie at Babilon. He confesseth God to be iust, and worthely to haue punished the Jues. he knowlegeth their faultes, & blameth ꝑ stubburne inobediẽce of his nacio. He desireth perdõ for their offẽces, & that God hauing pitie vpõ his people, at ꝑ last wolde bring thẽ again into their countreie. Further to stirre vp faith in their hartes, he telleth that Israel shalbe sent home again

The Epistle of Jeremie. Thepistle of *Ieremie* put vnto *Baruch* warneth the captiues that thei tourne not frõ the true god, & reuerẽce ꝑ gods of *Babylon*. And therfore he greuously rebuketh idolatrie, coũsailing thẽ to worshyp the very God, & serue him onely.

I thought good to adde hereunto that whiche Theodorus Bibliander hathe written to oure greatte profite of the bookes Ecclesiastical in his woorke De optimo genere interpretādi hebraica in whiche he briefly toucheth bothe the effecte of the bokes, and the times when thei were writtē, which we haue not set out: his woordes be these. *The Ecclesiastical bookes also thei call* Hagiographa: *And although thei haue no fitte authoritie to strengthen, and confirme thinges that come into contencion, as haue the Canonicall writinges, yeat are thei not reiected as APOCRYPHA soche as is the Prophecie of ELDAD, and MEDAD. Thassention of Moses, the Apocalyps of Helyas, and many other like deuises of the Deuilles Spirite. But the Ecclesiasticall bookes bee admitted bothe to bee taughte, and learned of faithfull people, & of many so reuerenced, that some menne putte Iudith in the order of Canonicall Scripture. We will* rehearse theim keping *the due order of times whē thei were written. Parte of theim conteine Histories from the time of Ezechias vnto the birthe of Pompeie, whiche firste toke from the Iewes their kingdome. Tobias translated by Saincte Hierome out of the Chaldee into Latine, as was Iudith also*

The times of the bookes Ecclesiastical

Apocrypha

The times of the ecclesiastical Bookes.

mencioneth thoſe thinges that wer doen emong the Aſſirians after the tenne Tribes were ledde into captiuitie, teaching by notable example, what loue ought to bee in parentes, children, and maried folkes. Iudith ſhewing the nature of faithfulneſſe and conſtaunce, declareth that Bethulia was beſieged of Nabuchodonozors Lieutenaunte, father to the great Nabuchodonozor, whiche tooke priſoners Ioachim, Iecomam, and Zedechiam, & howe it was deliuered by the meanes of the righte holie woman Iudith. And I am in doubte whether it was in that battaile in which Manaſſes alſo king of Iuda was caried awaie into Aſſiria, & ſhortlie after ſente home againe. For while he ruled emong the Medes, Dioces called alſo Arphaxat, builded the Citie Ecbatana in the Countrie of Medea. But I knowe that Ioſephus referreth theſe thinges to the time of Cambyſes. Damel hath the remenaunt of Suſanna, and the Dragon of Bel. In Heſter bee certeine thinges added vnto it. The thirde of Eſdras repeateth ſomewhat of the paſſouer of Ioſias written in the bookes of Kinges, and of thoſe thinges whiche be in Eſra. and Nehemias after their retourne out of Babylon, minglyng ther with a goodly contentione of witte, and wiſedome, in whiche zorobabel hadde the victoric. The bokes of the Machabees declare the affliction of Iſrael,

Iudith

Suſanna
Bel.
Heſter
The thirde of Eſdras.

by

by Antiochus Epiphanes, and the Macedones, in whom is the euident figure of Antichriſte. Parte of the Eccleſiaſtical bookes treate of vertue and good liuyng. Baruch gatheryng together the ſenten- Baruch.
ces of Eſaie, and Ieremie, whiche make to the re-
profe of Idoles, rebuketh Idolatrie verie ſore. The Fourth of
fourth booke of Eſra hath diuers prophecies, and Eſra.
is verie moche in viſions, as is alſo Ezechiel, za-
charias, and Daniel. Ieſus the ſoonne of Sirach
about the.cxxxviii. Olympiade put foorth his boke
Eccleſiaſticus, whiche is called alſo Sapientia,
and Hierome founde it in Hebrue intitled by the Ecclesiasti-
name of Parables. It teacheth Philoſophie in ſen- cus.
tences, whiche is a verie olde vſage, and in it be
many thinges ſpoken of before in the Preacher,
and in the Prouerbes of Solomon. The booke of Sapientia
wiſedome, whiche is aſcribed to Philo the moſte e-
loquent of all the Iewes, and as cunnyng menne
dooe ſaie, in maner an other Plato, doth more large
ly, and in Grekiſhe eloquence declare ſoche thin-
ges, as in the beginnyng of the Prouerbes dooe per-
teine to the praiſe of true wiſedome. The praier
of Manaſſes whiche is not in the Greke examplers Manaſſes
ſauoureth plainely of the Hebrue phraſe. Thus Praier
moche ſaieth our Theodorus. **Now will I re-
tourne to my purpoſe.**

Thou haſt (O reader) as farre forth

as

The darknes and errours of the Philosophers.

as we can shewe and comprehende in briefe expositions, the riches, and ample learnyng of our heauenlie Philosophie. Saie on now you our aduersaries what maie be thought that we lacke, or what you thinke we ought to begge of that your Philosophie? Verely if you will confesse the trueth, you must say, that we be destitute in no part of true learnyng & wisedome. I graunt in dede ỹ in the bible nothing is taught of that part of Philosophie, whiche is called Sermocinal, neither of thinges natural, or artes Mathematical. For these be as it were handmaides to leade vs to the queue of all sciences, & teache vs that we maie be able to speake with her, and learne true knowledge of thinges perteinyng to God & man, speciallie the actes sermonicall. We dooe not condemne the sobre & moderate studies herein, but confesse theim necessarie, and moche helping to atteine wisedome. Philosophie learned in measure profiteth moche. Yet this we saie, that to knowe God, & leade our liues vertuouslie, not onely is taught in our Bi-

Moderate studie of the sciẽces doeth helpe to wisedome.

bles,

bles, but alſo moꝛe plainelie and perfectlye, then in all youꝛ wꝛitynges. ffoꝛ youꝛ Philoſophers haue wꝛitten hereof darkelie, yea, and falſelie to in many poinctes. Ariſtotle whiche in this part is with you a King, and in maner woꝛſhipped foꝛ a GOD, hath foꝛ the nones darkened thoſe thinges whiche he wꝛote of Moꝛal Philoſophie, yea, of naturall to. He vſed alſo doubtfull ſentences, that might be bowed to whiche ſide you liſte, and as he checked all wꝛiters befoꝛe him, ſo fearyng to be taunted againe, & his ſaiynges coꝛrected of thē that came after, he made ſure pꝛouiſion in caſe he were caught, by one ſhifte oꝛ other to winde him ſelfe out. He wꝛote alſo vnto king Alexander, that none ſhoulde vnderſtād his commentaries, excepte he hadde hearde them redde of his owne mouthe at home in his houſe. He ſtudied foꝛ a kinde of enditynge moꝛe bꝛiefe and cutted then euer was any, that ſometime he ſemed rather to pointe to the matier, then ſpeake it out plainelie, whiche thing Lodouicus viues, a man of a

Ariſtotle.

of a sharpe witte & iudgment, right wel perceiued. In his moralles, he teacheth moche naughtinesse, contrarie to right, reason, and our religion. But Plato, one lesse corrupt then Aristotle, hath dooen so euill about the maiestie of the eternal GOD, that he maketh all his Philosophie worthelie suspected. The trueth whiche he knew of the true god for feare he durst not declare. I haue witnesse hereof Iustine the Philosopher and martire, in a warning that he geueth to the Gentiles, saiyng thus:

Plato.

Plato when he should haue shewed the doctrine of Moses, and other Prophetes touchyng one God, whiche he had learned in Egipte, fearyng that happened to Socrates, and to stirre vp against him some Anytus and Melissus to accuse him of here sie before the men of Athens, & so to be poysoned went about a variable & crafty conueyed sermon touching the Goddes, wherby their opinion might stande whiche thought there were many, and theirs also whiche thought the contrarie, as by his writynges maie caselie be seen.

Loe the goodlie actes of these two Princes of the Philosophers, and in maner their Goddes. What should we

loke

loke for of the commune sorte, seyng in these their chiefe lightes so great darknesse is founde. I trowe no man is ignoraunt what these blinde guides haue iudged touchyng the soule, what trouble thei haue made, and howe folishelie babled therof. *Of the highest good thing*, as many be their opinions, as daies in the yere. Finallie, thei haue scarse iudged rightlie of any thing that perteineth to blessednesse, and vertue: and yet folow we these bussardes whollie geuen to worship and maruail at them, more thē at all the Bible: yea, we thinke no man learned in dede, except he be well sowsed in the sinkes of their filthy errours. Howe moche better and more wiselie did thei whiche sometime beyng noble men in Christes churche, forsakyng the studie of Philosophie (wherin yet to this daie by all consent, thei were most excellent) gaue them selues whollie to studie the Bible our heauenlie Philosophie, and hasting awaie from enormious lies, deceiptes, & blindenesse, ioiefullie came to the bright shinyng sunne of trueth. I meane *Origen, Iustine, Panteum*,

um, Cipzian and innumerable other excellent Philosophers and Dzatours, whose soulles now reste and liue with the Lozde God eternal. I will not coũsaile any man therfoze to folow those blind teachers, oz their erronious doctrine, wherin no pure noz certein thing maie be founde. I cal and exhozt all mẽ as loude and as hartelie as I can, to the most holie, and sacred Bible. Foz mans hope & saluation onely standeth in that learnyng which the Bible teacheth vnto vs. All the right wisedome that man hath, resteth in this one pointe, to knowledge God foz his owne God, and that through Christe, of whõ all the bookes of al the Philosophers haue not shewed so moche as one woozde, neither how by true faieth and sure hope we should cleue vnto him whẽ he is knowen, and honour this most mightie Lozde & boũtifull father, in charitie and innocencie of life. This is our determinacion and doctrine, this is our ful mind & sentence I testifie it therefoze with as loude a voice as I can, I proclaime and warne

Wherin all wisedome resteth.

you to kepe it. This is that, whiche al the Philosophers haue sought for all the daies of their life, and yet could neuer fasten vpon it, nor holde it: euē for because seking it a wrong waie, either thei helde a naughtie religion, or elles made no religion at all. Wherfore awaie with al soche, which set not mans life in ordre, but distrouble it. For what teache thei, or whom dooe thei instruct whiche can not teache them selues? Whom can sicke men heale, whom can blinde men guide? Shall we tarie till Socrates knowe some what, or Anaragoras finde light in darkenesse, or Democritus drawe trueth out of the wel, or Empedocles dilate the pathes of his minde, or Arcesilas and Carneades can see, fele, and perceiue? Beholde a voice from heauen teachyng the trueth, and shewyng a light brighter then the shinyng Sunne speaketh in the Bible openlie, plainelie, and certainelie. Lette all therefore that care for verie wisedome come hither. Will we hurt our selues, and linger to take it?

You

You that will be wise and happie harken to the heauēlie voice, learne Iesus Christe to be your iustice, and in him to be laied vp all the treasure of Goddes high wisedome and science, learne the misterie of your faieth, and natiuitie, despise worldly thinges, loue heauenlie, that after this miserable and wretched life you maie come to the ioie that is prepared for you.

A cōferring of the holie bokes with the prophan

But the pleasant varietie of the prophane writers, and their proper cast of teachyng dooeth moche delight theim. Well go to. Declare I praie you some of your gaie and goodlie colours. Thei teache wisedome (saie thei) in pleasant and fine disputatiōs, in swete dialoges and elegant epistles, as dooeth Plato, Aristotle, & Seneca: In eloquent orations, as Isocrates, Cicero, and Demosthenes, in dilectable fables & allegories: as Homere, and Virgil: in sentences and Prouerbes bothe shorte and swete, as the seuen sages of Greece, Chrisippus also, & Diogenianus: in notable histories, as Herodotus, Halicarnasseus, Diodorus Siculus, and Liuius Patauinus,

uinus. But if these great boasters of Gentile Auchours were alwell accustomed to holie writinges as thei are to prophane, thei had foũde lõg ere this in the Bible also those facions in teching of pleasant variette, whiche thei so mer-ueile at in these deceiptful naughtie mas-ters of error. Thei praise the fine disputaciõs of philosophers touching Wisedome. But *Cicero* in his first boke *De oratore. Though al mẽ rage therat, yet wil I (saith he) speake as I thinke: By Hercules that one litle boke of the twelue tables, if a man will see the groũdes and chiefe pointes of the lawe, semeth to me bothe for their auchoritie, and profite, farre to passe all that euer the Philosophers wrote.* And who knoweth not the ten preceptes of gods law to excede the .xij. tables a M. folde? So then, be these bosters of vaine philosophie neuer so angry, yeat will I also saie that I thinke, & beleue to be true: that one briefe treatise of the ten Commaundementes, or boke of Deuteronomie, touching the foundacion, principall partes, and effecte of the lawes, farre to surmounte in grauitie, and profite al the writinges of all the Philosophers.

In the booke of Iob, wise, and Godlie menne dispute very finelie, to whome if you compare the persones in *Plato*, or *Cicero*, you shall see in respecte thei bee right naught: whiche Hieroime also cõfessing saieth: *The booke of I O B determineth all matiers with Logiqual proposicion, assumption confirmation, and conclusion*. One Epistle of the moste eloquent Paule, Peter, and Jhon, hathe in it more true holinesse, and learning, then all the Epistles of all the Philosophers. Neither dooe wee lacke right excellent Oratours, as *Esaie Micheas, Ioel, Oseas*, with many other mo, whiche haue left vnto vs moste profitable, cunning, and elegant oracions. You meruelle at the thundering woordes of *Pericles*, the Eloquence of *Demosthenes*, and *Cicero*. Thei be reported to haue moued the mindes of the hearers, and enforced theim to what thei woulde. If this bee so praise worthie, what saie you to our Paule, which with bolde, and chereful countenaunce, though he stode in irons before the mightie, and learned King *Agrippa*, before the Princes of *Syria*, and before *Festus* himselfe president of Iurie,

so

so learnedlie, and plainlie pleaded his owne cause, and that in a matier of deth and for a religion hated of all men, that King *Agrippa* himselfe rauished in his wittes cried out saiyng. *Thou hast almoste made me a Christian man.* And *Festus* himself ouercome with his most pure, and clere oration, saied with a loude voice, *Paule, thou arte besides thy selfe, moche Learning hath made the madde.* Yeat was this *Festus* neither vneloquent, nor yet vnlearned, nor one that hated the studie of philosophie I praie you in soche an audiēce, in such hate of al mē, and so heinous complaintes of false accusers, besides this in a matier of death also, yea, & in irons to, what woulde *Cicero* your prince of Eloquence haue doen? Without doubt his spirite stopped vp for feare, scarce sobbingly could he haue brought furthone word. For vpō a time, as *Plutarche* reherseth, neither bounde, nor led in chaines but borne into the court hall in a softe chariot, to pleade not his owne matier, nor a matier of death, but for *Milo*, when he sawe *Pompeies* armed menne standing rounde about in bright harnesse, he was

Acts. xxvi.

Cicero

amased, and confounded, & at last trembling, & scarse bringing out one worde he began fearfully not to speake, but to sobbe. Besides this we haue wisedome couered also in goodly Allegories, as figuratiue ceremonies, parables, & canticles: wher you shal find more misteries bothe honest, and profitable, than in all the vngodlie verses, whiche al the minstrelles, and Harpers haue song in the praise, and honour of their wine God Bacchus. In dede thei trimme vp their fables with alluring woordes, and yeat geue you a swearde laied ouer with honie. Most part of their writinges be of deflouring virgines, adulterie, lecherie, deceipte, crueltie, murther, vainglorie, & thinges not to be spoken of. But our Poeme is pure, cleane, and honest without all ieopardie. Who euer spake or wrote more finely, and wisely, then our Solomon? Of whome we reade in the thirde boke of Kinges, the fowerth chapiter. *And GOD gaue Sapience, and vnderstanding to SOLOMON aboue measure, and a breadth of harte as the sande of the Sea. And his wisedome excelled al the wisedome of the chil-*

dren

dren of the East, and of Egypte. For of all mortalle menne he was the wiseſt. And there came of all Nacions, and Regions of the World to heare his wisedome that was so moche spoken of. Yea, the Quene of SABA in Riche apparaile, and of wonderful wisedome came also and when she had communed with him of al matiers, and perceiued how he gouerned his Citie, and Houlholde, shee saied.

The fame that I hearde in my lande of thine Eloquence, and Wisedome, is true, but I woulde not beleue it, till I came my selfe, and see with mine yies. And yet lo, no not the one haulfe of thy matiers is tolde me, thou so excellest in Wisedome, and passest all that is spoken of the. These most surest praises of our wisedome no man merueileth at, and yeat we wonder at certeine fables, and vaine thinges, whiche very vain liers haue writte of vain Philosophers: Namely of Appolonius, how he wente into Persia, and so ouer the Mounteine Caucasus, through the Albanes, Scythians, Massagetes, those riche Kingdomes of Inde, and passing ouer the greate Riuer PHYSON, at laste

came to the Brachmans, & all to heare Iarchas sittyng in his golden throne, and drinkyng of the fountaine Tantalus, and disputyng emong a fewe persones of the nature and properties of natural thinges. We rather wonder at the great desires of Pythagoras and Plato, of whiche that one is reported to haue gone to Egypt, that other to the Prophetes of Mēphis, by a painefull waie, & ieopardeous iourney. Stād stil here a little I praie you, and learne to be madde and wise together. You thinke theim praise worthie, and moche to be made of, which toke a farre iourney to certaine wise men I wotte not who, to learne of them I wot not what but these our men you neglect and despise, & yet of them to be taught all the whole worlde made haste to come, because thei knew that the high God had there set vp his throne & chaire of most excellent and perfecte wisedome. And why folow not you their exāples, whō you so greatlie praise, and moche marueile at? Now as touching an history, is there any like ours, so auncient, so

sure

ſure, ſo graue, ſo profitable? Cicero in his booke, De oratore, ſaieth: *An hiſtorie is the witneſſe of time, the light of truth, the life of remembraunce, the maiſtreſſe of liuyng, the meſſenger of Antiquitie.* And if this be ſo, Imaie ſaie trulie that none haue an hiſtorie but chriſtien men. As touchyng certaintie of time, you haue nothing before the Olympiades were founde, and thei began but in the time of Eſaie vnder king Iothan. So theſe your writers confound many thinges together, and laie them in heapes all out of ordre, breaking of their matier with vaine foliſhe fables, the Grecians eſpeciallie, which ſtudied not trueth, but rather to lie, and therfore are condemned of Cicero, Quintilian, and Iuuenal. *Lodouicus viues* ſpeakyng plainelie, ſaieth: ſome for feare of reproche, & to lie the more ſafelie, leauyng the Grecians matiers, fette their compaſſe a farre of, from the Perſians, Egiptians, and Chaldees, as did Herodotus the father of lies, and Diodorus Siculus a triflyng Grecian. Your aucthours alſo write of light matiers neither pleaſaunt nor pro-

hiſtorie.

Olympiades when thei firſt began.

profitable, and lette out their bablyng with vaine descriptions, & no goodnesse at all. But our moste profitable historie truelie declareth the ordre of times, seuering the kingdomes one frō another, & speaketh of nothing without a good reason. It maie best also be called the messenger of antiquitie. For beginnyng at the creation of the worlde, it holdeth on to the Monarchie of the Persians, euen vnto *Xerxes*. Josephus writyng against Appion of Alexandria, saieth thus: The Greke historiens, as Acusilaus, and those that folowed him aboute the time of Cadmus Milesius, were but a little before the warres of the Persians, as witnesseth *Hellanicus*. So the Greke historians there began where ours left of. The Latines be moche later. Now then it is plaine whether our historie or theirs mai rather be called the messenger of Antiquitie. Finallie, as the holie writers in learnyng and varietie farre passe the prophane, so in glorie and renoume through al kingdomes frō the beginning of the world, thei excel all other: so that to saie that

Phi-

Philosophie is therfore most commendable, because it hath alwaies bene had in moste price, is a thing to no purpose. The kingdomes of Egypt and Assyria were of all the world most auncient. In how great estimation Joseph & Moses were in that one, it is well knowen. In the other how shone our Philosophie, when as Esaie Prophecied in one night about the walles of Hierusalem, were slaine an hundred foure score, and v.M. men. To speake nothing of the high aucthoritie of Samuel, Josue, and Dauid: *Dooe we not reade of king Solomon, how he was magnified aboue all the kinges of thearth, as well in riches as wisedome?* And as in the monarchie of Babilō dominiō was geuen to our Daniel, so did Mardocheus rule the whole kingdome of the Medes By the mightiest kinges of Persia Cyrus and Darius great Priuilegies were graunted to our Philosophers. This is euident in Josua, Esdras, and Nehemias, whiche by fauoure of the princes of Persia built vp againe both temple & citie. In thempire of the Macedoniens at the request of Ptolomeus

Esai. xxxviii

Phila

Philadelphus king of Egipt, whiche sent also giftes of incomperable value to the temple of Hierusalem, our lawe was translated into the Greke tonge. But in the monarchie of the Romains the Bible now dispersed through the whole worlde so willinglie was receiued of all men, that al whiche had witte and knowlege moste gladlie badde your deceiptful Philosophie farewell. Why then go you now about to call it vp againe being ones dead and buried? Or what remaineth els, then all lies quite forsaken, to geue our selues wholie to be instructed in the moste auncient, certaine, and moste holesome Philosophie of the Bible?

FINIS.

Londini in

ædibus Richardi Graftoni

Reginæ a typographia excuſum.

Anno Domini. M.D.LIII.

Cum priuilegio ad imprimen=
dum ſolum.

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Exposition